

1 TOWN OF WEST HARTFORD

2  
3 TOWN COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING  
4 February 25, 2020, 6:18 p.m.,  
5 Legislative Chambers  
6

7 Re: Application Filed on Behalf of FW CT-Corbin's  
8 Corner Shopping Center, LLC, Owner of 1459 New Britain  
9 Avenue, Located Within Special Development District  
10 (SDD) #6, 1445-1459 New Britain Avenue.  
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**A p p e a r a n c e s :**

**Town Council Members Present:**

**MAYOR SHARI CANTOR**

**LEON DAVIDOFF**

**LEE GOLD**

**CAROL BLANKS**

**CHRIS WILLIAMS**

**MARY FAY**

**BETH KERRIGAN**

**Alternates:**

**I. CHARLES MATHEWS**

**JOSEPH STAFFORD**

**MATT W. HART**

**Town Manager**

**DALLAS DODGE**

**Corporation Counsel**

**ESSIE S. LABROT**

**TOWN CLERK**

**A p p e a r a n c e s:(cont'd)**

**For the Applicant:**

**ALTER & PEARSON, LLC**

**701 Hebron Avenue**

**Glastonbury, Connecticut 06033**

**By: ROBIN PEARSON, ESQ.**

**RPearson@alterpearson.com**

**860.652.4020**

**For EDGE FITNESS and RED ROBIN:**

**STANGER STANFIELD**

**433 South Main Street, #112**

**West Hartford, Connecticut 06110**

**By: MELISSA HARRIS, ESQ.**

**MHarris@stangerlaw.com**

**860.561.0650**

1 PRESIDENT CANTOR: All right. We are calling the 6:15  
2 public hearing to order, application filed on  
3 behalf of FW CT-Corbin's Corner Shopping Center,  
4 LLC, owner of 1459 New Britain Avenue, located  
5 within Special Development District, SDD Number 6,  
6 1445 to 1459 New Britain Avenue.

7 The application seeks approval for a  
8 renovation of the shopping center including  
9 alterations to the existing building facades,  
10 construction of an approximately 22,550 square  
11 foot addition to the rear of Trader Joe's and  
12 either the demolition and replacement of the now  
13 vacant Jared Jewelers building with the new 7,360  
14 square-foot restaurant building with an outdoor  
15 eating or redesign of the existing building's  
16 exterior to accommodate a restaurant use and  
17 outdoor dining.

18 In addition, associated improvements  
19 including the reconfiguration of the parking  
20 layout, installation of new landscaping, lighting  
21 and pedestrian amenities, and changes to the sign  
22 criteria and SDD conditions are proposed.

23 Rollcall, Ms. Labrot?

24 MS. LABROT: Ms. Blanks?

25 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Here.

1 MS. LABROT: Ms. Cantor?

2 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Here.

3 MS. LABROT: Mr. Davidoff?

4 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Here.

5 MS. LABROT: Ms. Fay.

6 COUNCILOR FAY: Here.

7 MS. LABROT: Mr. Gold?

8 COUNCILOR GOLD: Here.

9 MS. LABROT: Ms. Kerrigan?

10 COUNCILOR KERRIGAN: Here.

11 MS. LABROT: Mr. Sweeney is absent. Mr. Wenograd is  
12 absent. Mr. Williams?

13 COUNCILOR WILLIAMS: Here.

14 MS. LABROT: And we have alternate Mr. Mathews?

15 MR. MATHEWS: Here.

16 MS. LABROT: And alternate Mr. Stafford?

17 MR. STAFFORD: Here.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Ms. Labrot. And thank  
19 you Mr. Stafford and Mr. Mathews, for being here,  
20 to both of you for being here tonight to fill in.

21 So we will start with a presentation from the  
22 applicant, but before we get started I just want  
23 to set forth some procedures for the public  
24 hearing. The applicant will make a presentation.  
25 Following the presentation members of the public

1 will have an opportunity to comment on the  
2 application. You will have the opportunity to  
3 sign up to speak.

4 Comments from members of the public should be  
5 limited to three minutes each. A group of  
6 individuals who wish to comment on the application  
7 should be limited to 15 minutes. All persons who  
8 are interested in speaking on the application  
9 should enter his or her name on the sign-up sheet.  
10 The Chair will call the speakers from the sign-up  
11 sheet. All persons recognized by the Chair will  
12 approach the podium before commenting and will  
13 give his or her name and address.

14 The Chair will ensure an orderly hearing, me.  
15 If necessary I will take steps to make sure that  
16 everybody is respectful and keeps good decorum at  
17 all times.

18 So I guess I would always reserve the right  
19 to continue the public hearing if the  
20 presentations/comments go on too long just as a  
21 caviat. That is not the goal here. The goal  
22 would be to conclude the hearing.

23 Okay. So with that, we'll start the  
24 presentation from the applicant.

25 MS. PEARSON: Good evening, Madam Mayor, members of the

1 Town Council. My name is Robin Pearson. I am an  
2 attorney with the firm of Alter & Pearson in  
3 Glastonbury, Connecticut, and I'm pleased to be  
4 here this evening before you to represent the  
5 applicant formerly known as FW CT-Corbin's Corner  
6 Shopping Center, LLC, which is the owner of 1459  
7 New Britain Avenue in this application for  
8 improvements to that portion of SDD Number 6 that  
9 it owns, Corbin's Corner Shopping Center.

10 And I think what I'd like to do at this point  
11 is bring down the screen and be able to take a  
12 look at some of the exhibits that we have to  
13 support our application this evening.

14 While the screen is coming down I would just  
15 like to direct your attention to the fact that the  
16 sign was appropriately posted on the property  
17 before the opening of the public hearing. You  
18 have the signed affidavit. So the original has  
19 been provided to the Council Clerk this evening.

20 Also I'd just like to mention as we go  
21 through the application I'm going to refer to the  
22 applicant as Regency. Regency is indeed the owner  
23 of the shopping center -- or operator, if you  
24 will, of the shopping center, not the owner of the  
25 land per se. It owns the land under that LLC that

1 I just mentioned, and technically that is the  
2 applicant this evening, the owner of the property  
3 itself.

4 But we will refer to Regency. It is a  
5 Regency Center, one of many that they own up and  
6 down the East Coast and otherwise. They, as noted  
7 in the application document submitted, like to  
8 locate their centers in places that are considered  
9 prosperous high-end attractive vibrant  
10 communities, and that was one of the reasons that  
11 they originally came to West Hartford and acquired  
12 this particular site and this particular shopping  
13 center.

14 With that, can we go to the aerial  
15 photograph?

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Just speak loudly.

17 MS. PEARSON: So the exhibit you have up before you --  
18 and this exhibit is on both sides of the screen so  
19 the audience can see what we are alluding to --  
20 shows it outlined in yellow the entire SDD Number  
21 6. It goes up here.

22 The property that is owned by Regency is the  
23 southern portion of Special Development District  
24 Number 6, the Corbin's Corner Shopping Center.  
25 And you'll note that the buildings, there are two



1 buildings that form the main portion of the  
2 shopping center, one in which, Edge Fitness is  
3 located in the corner and also Trader Joe's to the  
4 south of it on the other arm of the SDD portion  
5 that's owned by Regency.

6 Also located on the site is the Red Robin  
7 Restaurant. This is the Jared's building that is  
8 vacant at the moment, and the bank is up in this  
9 area, all of which are facilities that are owned  
10 by Regency within this special development  
11 district.

12 The application before you tonight proposes a  
13 renovation of the facades of those buildings, not  
14 Red Robin, but the two main lines of stores and  
15 also the old Jared's building, which as I'll  
16 explain later will actually be removed and a new  
17 structure will be constructed if the application  
18 is approved.

19 The application also calls for improvements  
20 to the sidewalks out front of those buildings, and  
21 a 2550 square-foot addition to the rear of Trader  
22 Joe's basically backroom facility for the Trader  
23 Joe's store.

24 A new 7,630 'foot restaurant with outdoor  
25 dining generally in the area of the existing

1 Jared's building is proposed, and also changes to  
2 the sign criteria which have been in place for a  
3 while which govern tenant signage on this portion  
4 of Special Development District Number 6.

5 When filed, when this application was filed  
6 on December 6th of 2019 we were in a bit of a  
7 different situation than we are now. And the  
8 application as proposed then included an  
9 alternative partly because Regency wasn't exactly  
10 sure how its reinvestment of this into this  
11 particular special development district would play  
12 out.

13 We sort of hedged our bets by submitting  
14 alternative proposals with that application, one  
15 of which called for leaving the Jared's building  
16 as it currently exists, leaving the footprint and  
17 just doing renovations to the exterior of that  
18 building, also including outdoor dining to support  
19 restaurant use, but not doing any changes around  
20 the building of any significance.

21 At that point in time Regency was looking to  
22 secure a restaurant tenant, but had not completed  
23 that. And in fact, at this point there is no  
24 lease signed with regard to a restaurant tenant,  
25 but as I'll explain that alternative as well as a

1 proposal that was originally in place -- and we'll  
2 go into this in a little more detail later -- to  
3 redo, realign drive aisles and make changes to the  
4 parking layout in the site were also part of the  
5 overall renovation of the center as of  
6 December 6th, when the application was filed.

7 It would have called for moving the aisle so  
8 that you could get more parking spaces available,  
9 for instance, in this area down by in the  
10 southeasterly part of the site, sort of in front  
11 of the Trader's and Edge Fitness area.

12 However, since the submission was made  
13 Regency has now committed to proceeding with  
14 construction of the new restaurant, therefore no  
15 longer needing the alternative plan to reuse the  
16 existing Jared's. And it is in the process of and  
17 hopes to be able to sign -- though it hasn't  
18 happened, so the end tenant could change -- but it  
19 is interested in bringing a BJ's Restaurant Bar  
20 and Grill to the site.

21 It would mean a new structure, and as you'll  
22 see in more detail later it will be located closer  
23 to New Britain Avenue. And that is the 7,630  
24 square-foot building that was originally proposed,  
25 although it's siting on the site has changed a

1       little bit.

2               Also as you are aware because of the  
3       submission today, from the firm of Stanger and  
4       Stanfield on behalf of Edge Fitness and Red Robin  
5       restaurant two tenants are objecting to the  
6       restaurant that is proposed. And Edge Fitness has  
7       indicated also to Regency that they cannot support  
8       the proposed improvements with the driveway  
9       realignment and the additional parking down in  
10      that part of the parking field.

11              So we have stripped down the application and  
12      gone is the alternate plan to reuse the Jared's  
13      building for restaurant use. And gone is the plan  
14      for realignment of the main drive to make changes  
15      to the parking field which we thought were  
16      positive -- but so be it. They're not on the  
17      table now.

18              So if this application that we are presenting  
19      to you this evening is approved those two  
20      proposals would not be included. The Regency  
21      would improve -- make all the changes to the  
22      facade of the buildings, the sidewalk areas in  
23      front of the buildings, create the new restaurant  
24      and do changes around that new restaurant, and do  
25      all of this starting in the spring if this

1 application is approved with the intention of  
2 doing everything at once in the center in a  
3 manageable way so that it will be possible to have  
4 all the work done before the holiday season at the  
5 end of this year.

6 It's an aggressive schedule. They know they  
7 can do it if we proceed as soon as possible, and  
8 that is why certainly from our perspective we were  
9 hoping we were going to be able to conclude  
10 everything this evening.

11 So you now have before you a new set of plans  
12 that was filed with you today. It removes all  
13 those alternatives. You all should have both PDF  
14 copies of that and paper copies of the new set of  
15 plans. You also have before you a new parking  
16 analysis dated February 24, 2020, which updates  
17 the prior updated parking analyses that were filed  
18 with the Town. That is the one that you should  
19 pay attention to and which we will discuss  
20 tonight.

21 And I just want to note that in our cover  
22 letter that included the plans and the new parking  
23 analysis we note for you that our traffic experts  
24 indicate that even at peak usage hours there are  
25 currently 639 vacant parking spaces in Special

1 Development District Number 6. That's the whole  
2 site. It's not just on our portion, of course.

3 And the updated parking analysis reflects  
4 also the addition of new parking spaces that we  
5 have proposed primarily in response to comments  
6 from town staff that this would be a good thing to  
7 do in the parking area between the new site and  
8 the existing bank, and we'll go into detail on  
9 that.

10 So as I said, we know that there are tenants  
11 here tonight and that they are going to speak in  
12 opposition to this application. Their claims  
13 apparently they say will arise from potentially  
14 lease restrictions.

15 I would just like to remind you that anything  
16 that has to do with what the private lease  
17 arrangements are between Regency and our tenants  
18 are just that. They're private contractual issues  
19 to the extent that they exist, and I assure you we  
20 do not say that the claims that you might hear  
21 about tonight are not valid claims, but that is  
22 not something that you need to worry about or  
23 consider, or in fact should you consider it when  
24 you make a decision on this application.

25 As you're well aware, what you need to look

1 at is what is allowed with regard to the zoning  
2 code for the Town of West Hartford. You should  
3 pay particular attention to the existing reviews  
4 that have taken place both by town administration  
5 and reviewing agencies with regard to the  
6 appropriateness of this application that is before  
7 you, and ultimately whether this is a good design  
8 and a good proposal for this particular site.

9 We feel that it's very unfortunate that we're  
10 here with opposition from our tenants. That's not  
11 what we would have liked to have happened. We  
12 wish that were not the case, but it is. And I  
13 assure you that Regency will continue to work with  
14 them to the extent that it's possible to resolve  
15 any issues that they might have -- but we have  
16 removed the driveway realignment which was of  
17 major concern to one of those tenants.

18 And we feel that this investment is still  
19 something that is totally worthy of your approval.  
20 Regency is committed to making a significant  
21 investment in this shopping center in town. The  
22 uses that are proposed conform to zoning. I will  
23 tell you that the investment is not only going to  
24 be made to the facade, but also with this  
25 restaurant we are going to be breathing new life

1 into a vacant dark building that's been dark for  
2 over ten months and add additional vitality to the  
3 center.

4 So you know, our vitality as we perceive it  
5 may be someone else's cause for concern, but we  
6 think by the time that we've gone through the  
7 parking analysis -- and frankly, this all comes  
8 down to parking and usage. We believe that we are  
9 going to be able to convince you that this is not  
10 going to be an impediment to the continued good  
11 functioning of this center.

12 Regency is committed to a significant  
13 investment. It's at least at this point looking  
14 to be \$7 million or more in this, in this center  
15 to accomplish which is now a limited upgrade of  
16 what they originally set out to do for the center.

17 So our presentation will go as follows.  
18 Langan Engineering will go through the existing  
19 site and the particulars of the redesign. That  
20 will be led by David Gagnon who is our civil  
21 engineer. He'll go through the overall site  
22 characteristics and what we're proposing. He'll  
23 be followed by Lucas Mauro, who is our traffic  
24 engineer also with Langan Engineering. I have  
25 submitted to the Council Clerk their resumes. So



1           they are on file as part of the record.

2           And then following their presentation Marc  
3           Moura who is an architect with Amenta Emma will  
4           talk about the inspiration for the design for the  
5           renovation of the facades and exactly how that  
6           will look and what we're trying to do with regard  
7           to this application.

8           I'd like to mention to you also Rebecca Wing  
9           is here on behalf of Regency. She is the senior  
10          manager of investments, should you have any  
11          particular questions for Regency that I cannot  
12          answer. But she is present, so I just wanted to  
13          let you know that that was the case.

14          Once they are finished with their  
15          presentation I'll just quickly address the  
16          outreach effort of the responses we received and  
17          go through the staff and administrative reviews.  
18          Obviously, it would probably be easier if we hold  
19          questions until we're finished with the  
20          presentation. And of course, we would like an  
21          opportunity to rebut any of the information that  
22          is brought forth in opposition to the application.

23          So with that, I'd like to turn it over to  
24          Langan Engineering.

25       **DAVID GAGNON:** Thank you. For the record my name is

1 David Gagnon. I'm a professional civil engineer  
2 with Langan Engineering here representing the  
3 applicant, Regency Centers.

4 I'd like to really briefly go over the  
5 existing conditions of the site, kind of nail down  
6 our initial application, go through our current  
7 application and our proposed improvements, and  
8 then after that I'll pass it off to our traffic  
9 professional.

10 Really briefly, right now you're looking  
11 at -- this is SDD Number 6, known as Corbin's  
12 Corner. It's a mixed-use plaza located at 1445  
13 through 1459 New Britain Avenue. It's split into  
14 two parcels -- and this is important to note. If  
15 you look through the center of the property, or  
16 the SDD there's actually a property line. North  
17 of that property line is not controlled by  
18 Regency. That is controlled by Seritage. So we  
19 do not have any control over that.

20 We're focusing this application on the  
21 southern portion of the SDD which is the Edge  
22 Fitness, the Old Navy, the Jared's and the  
23 development you see on the south.

24 Our portion of the lot is roughly 20 acres.  
25 The site totals 33 acres as a whole, SDD Number 6.

1 The site is bound by the state right of way on the  
2 north and western sides. This is New Britain  
3 Avenue, Route 71. To the east of our site we have  
4 residential properties. To the northeast is  
5 commercial property and to the south we have more  
6 residential properties.

7 And this really focuses on the portion of the  
8 site controlled by Regency. So this is the  
9 southern portion of the site.

10 A few things I want to point out real, real  
11 briefly to make sure everyone has their  
12 orientation on the site. On the northwest corner  
13 of the site you'll see Bank of America. Central  
14 to the site is the currently vacant Jared's. In  
15 the southwest corner of the site we have the Red  
16 Robin, and then we have the main retail strip  
17 which is occupied by the anchor tenants such as  
18 the Best Buy on the southwest, Trader Joe's, Edge  
19 Fitness, Old Navy and Total Wine.

20 A few things to note with the existing  
21 conditions is main access to this portion of the  
22 property is via a signalized intersection. This  
23 is just west of Jared's. That continues to the  
24 main entry drive to the site which basically cuts  
25 the main parking field almost in half and goes

1 almost directly to the Edge Fitness.

2 And one thing to notice is if you look at the  
3 southeast corner of the site the parking field  
4 really gets pinched in that area. Our initial  
5 application tried to fix this and improve the  
6 quality of the parking. We since revised our  
7 application due to concerns of the tenants, and  
8 I'll go over that.

9 And one thing to note that there is currently  
10 1,659 parking spaces in SD Number 66, and that's  
11 on both the northern and the southern portion of  
12 the site in total. We will be increasing that  
13 parking count by 25, which we we'll note in our  
14 presentation.

15 And I'd like to bring you through the history  
16 of our application. This gives you a rendering of  
17 the initial application that we had back in  
18 December. And as we talked about one of the  
19 main -- from a site perspective one of the main  
20 improvements that we had was we tried to improve  
21 the quality of parking in front of that southeast  
22 corner by adjusting that parking drive to the  
23 north. And what we did was we essentially bumped  
24 that parking drive to maximize parking in front of  
25 Edge, in front of Trader Joe's. We since had to

1 revise this because of pushback from the tenants.

2 Other improvements on the site, there's a  
3 complete renovation to the building facade. So  
4 this is the entire north building, entire south  
5 building facade renovations. This included  
6 hard-scaping improvements along the sidewalk,  
7 lighting improvements and landscaping  
8 improvements.

9 And one of the main improvements that we had  
10 in addition to this was the replacement of the  
11 Jared's with a new BJ's Brewhouse. There's not a  
12 lease signed for BJ's Brewhouse, but that's the  
13 intent. So it would be a complete demolition of  
14 the Jared's, replace that with the BJ's Brewhouse.

15 And in doing that we also eliminated --  
16 there's an existing drive that was just to the  
17 west of the Jared's. So we closed that to reduce  
18 congestion at that main entrance of the site. So  
19 by doing so we are improving traffic flow through  
20 the site.

21 A few other improvements that we had was a  
22 small expansion on the backside of Trader Joe's  
23 and that was really just kind of back-of-house  
24 storage, just more space for Trader Joe's  
25 operation.

1           This was our initial application, and one  
2 thing to note is with this layout we were  
3 increasing the parking by 58 in that area in front  
4 of Edge Fitness and Trader Joe's.

5           One of the reasons why we could not pursue  
6 this original application is there is an area  
7 referenced in the lease between the tenant and  
8 between Regency. It's that large red box. So  
9 they have control, or at least a say in what goes  
10 on in that area. So our driveway realignment  
11 would not work with those. We couldn't come to an  
12 agreement. So we had to avoid working in that big  
13 red box.

14           So to do that we had to go back to the  
15 drawing board and resubmit our application, which  
16 brings us to what you have in front of you today,  
17 our current application -- which is this.

18           What you're seeing here is essentially  
19 knocking down the Jared's, replacing it with the  
20 BJ's Brewhouse, increasing the parking around the  
21 Jared's and around the BJ's Brewhouse. But we  
22 have, in total we increased the park count versus  
23 the existing condition by 25.

24           We weren't able to realign that drive as we  
25 intended. So our current application does not

1 touch that parking field at all in front of the  
2 Edge Fitness, Trader Joe's. It really focuses on  
3 just around that Jared's increasing parking,  
4 increasing landscaping. The rest of our  
5 application has not changed as far as the building  
6 facade renovations, the hard-scaping improvements  
7 in front of the facade, lighting, landscaping and  
8 the expansion of the Trader Joe's.

9 So with that we also did -- to confirm that  
10 the parking capacity was on site. We formed a  
11 number of parking studies, and to go over the  
12 existing parking counts our proposed parking  
13 counts -- at the conclusion of our analysis, I  
14 have our traffic engineer Luke Mauro from Langan.

15 LUKE MAURO: Good evening everyone. For the record my  
16 name is Luke Mauro, traffic engineer with Langan  
17 Engineering. I'm a professional engineer in the  
18 state of Connecticut and also a professional  
19 traffic operations engineer.

20 I'm just going to briefly run through the  
21 latest parking assessment that was submitted on  
22 behalf of the application yesterday. As David  
23 mentioned we prepared a parking assessment to  
24 verify the adequacy of both the existing and  
25 proposed on-site parking programs.

1           A general summary of the existing conditions  
2 based on our parking counts; let me start off by  
3 stating we had completed parking counts on Friday  
4 December 6, 2019, from 3 to 7 p.m. We also  
5 completed parking counts on Saturday,  
6 December 7th, 2019, from 11 to 7 p.m., which  
7 generally captured the peak hours of operation and  
8 the parking demand for a retail mixed-use center  
9 such as this.

10           And we completed the counts in December in  
11 order to capture peak season operations of a  
12 typical retail facility such as this. Shortly  
13 there afterwords, I believe it was late December  
14 the Edge fitness opened up in the southeast corner  
15 of the plaza. In this case that would be the  
16 lower left corner of the plaza.

17           So we conducted a second round of parking  
18 counts in January to account for the recent  
19 opening of the Edge Fitness. Those parking counts  
20 were conducted Saturday, January 25, 2020. Those  
21 were from 11 to 7 p.m., and again on Tuesday,  
22 January 28, 2020, from 4 to 8 p.m. So all in all,  
23 24 hours total worth of parking counts completed  
24 over four different dates at the center.

25           After analyzing the data we developed what is



1 the peak parking demand of the overall center,  
2 peak meaning the parking demand over that 24 hours  
3 worth of count data, the parking demand  
4 experienced for the highest half hour of those 24  
5 hours worth of data.

6 So after taking into account all the data  
7 collected, as David stated, there's 1659 existing  
8 parking spaces on site. The highest period of  
9 peak parking demand was 1,020 occupied parking  
10 spaces, which accounts for a total number of 639  
11 existing unoccupied parking spaces based on the  
12 data we collected on those four dates.

13 After accounting for the existing conditions  
14 we prepared an estimate of what the future parking  
15 demand of the plaza would be. Just briefly, as  
16 David mentioned we're adding twelve parking spaces  
17 in the -- what we're calling the parking area,  
18 sub-area F which is the location of the proposed  
19 restaurant and the existing bank pad.

20 There is also -- and that change of three  
21 spaces in the vicinity of Total Wine, and there's  
22 also that change of ten parking spaces behind the  
23 proposed easterly building.

24 So all in all, with the increased total of 25  
25 parking spaces the total proposed parking program

1 for the development at full build out would be  
2 1684 parking spaces.

3 So accounting for the occupancy of the Edge  
4 Fitness, there's a vacant Rossinalli's in the  
5 corner of the plaza there as well. And also  
6 accounting for the proposed restaurant, the  
7 anticipated future peak parking demand of the  
8 center accounting for shared use, different  
9 credits for different times of day, the fact that  
10 the restaurant user themselves doesn't typically  
11 peak at the same time as retail, or perhaps maybe  
12 a gym user would.

13 We calculated that the anticipated future  
14 peak parking demand would be approximately 1,060  
15 parking spaces, which based on our proposed  
16 parking count would leave still a total of 624  
17 unoccupied parking spaces at full build out.

18 To take it one step further we did a confined  
19 parking analysis for what we're calling sub-area F  
20 here, which as I had stated is the location  
21 between the proposed restaurant pad and the bank.  
22 Existing parking in this area, 222 parking spaces.  
23 With our proposed additions there on the top of  
24 the plan you can see we're adding 12 parking  
25 spaces to this area, which results in a net total

1 of 234 proposed parking spaces at full build out.

2 During our data collection the highest  
3 observed peak parking demand, again for only one  
4 30-minute period out of that whole 24 hours there  
5 was -- the highest parking demand in this sub-area  
6 was 90 spaces during our existing data collection,  
7 leaving at full build out a total of 144  
8 unoccupied parking spaces before you account for  
9 the proposed restaurant user.

10 We looked at a couple things in terms of what  
11 the demand of the proposed restaurant use may be.  
12 We looked at ITE data, the Institute of Traffic  
13 Engineers which is the industry standard for  
14 estimating parking and traffic, traffic demand for  
15 various uses. Based on the ITE data for a  
16 restaurant of this size it's estimated that peak  
17 usage would demand about 121 parking spaces for  
18 restaurant use of this size.

19 As you can see, the peak demand of 121 spaces  
20 is less than 144 total spaces that will be left in  
21 this area upon full built out.

22 We also took a look at your zoning ordinance.  
23 Based on the zoning ordinance there I believe  
24 there's one space required for every three seats.  
25 So this would equate to the total parking

1 requirement per the zoning ordinance of 86 parking  
2 spaces for the proposed restaurant, again  
3 significantly lower than the 144 total unoccupied  
4 parking spaces estimated for this area at full  
5 build out.

6 So in summary, there's 1684 total parking  
7 spaces proposed in SDD 6 at full build out. We  
8 believe that's adequate to accommodate the  
9 proposed restaurant and we also believe that no  
10 further parking evaluation is required in that  
11 effect.

12 Just a brief touch on traffic. We did make a  
13 submission to the Town of West Hartford as part of  
14 our application, a brief memo, a traffic memo. We  
15 also made an administrative decision request  
16 application with the Connecticut DOT Office of  
17 State Traffic Administration. That's required for  
18 a change for any use that is over 100,000 square  
19 feet of total building area, or over 200 parking  
20 spaces. Any change to a development of that size  
21 does require review and approval from OSTA.

22 OSTA has reviewed our materials. They're in  
23 agreement that the project won't have a  
24 substantial impact on the state highway system.  
25 No offsite mitigation is required, and I have a

1 letter I will submit to the record -- not a  
2 letter. I'm sorry, an e-mail from OSTA that came  
3 through on February 7th. I'll read it out loud.

4 Good morning, Luke. The revised plan is  
5 incorporated -- change and requested, and is  
6 acceptable. Please submit hard copies of the plan  
7 along with Planning and Zoning and Town Council  
8 approval. With all those items, all comments will  
9 have been addressed and we can issue the  
10 administrative decision for the project.

11 So basically the only thing outstanding in  
12 terms of OSTA's review is the Town Council  
13 approval to move forward with this application.  
14 And with that, I will submit this.

15 And hand it over to Mark to tell you about  
16 the architecture.

17 MARC MOURA: Good evening, Town Council. For the  
18 record, my name is Marc Moura. I'm Senior  
19 Associate and Director of Design of Amenta Emma  
20 Architects.

21 I just sort of want to, you know, I always  
22 enjoy the process of educating you guys a little  
23 bit on how our office works and how we get to our  
24 design decisions. So this first slide, what  
25 you're seeing up here right now is really just

1 showing you the extent of the facade replacement  
2 that we're focusing on.

3 You know, this center has been layered upon  
4 layered upon and scabbed on for many years now.  
5 It's dated. The brick on the columns are falling  
6 apart. The cornice is a mess. The edifice is  
7 pretty disgusting. As we studied the, you know,  
8 the underside of the canopy and all the existing  
9 walls where the storefronts are, the storefronts  
10 are generally in pretty great shape, but it's just  
11 like a hodgepodge of materials that sprinkle all  
12 the way down the entire elevation.

13 So something with Amenta Emma, and what we  
14 like to think in looking at the slide is, kind of,  
15 you almost have to start from the beginning and  
16 think about, all right. What is a good base to  
17 start with? And we don't really like what you're  
18 seeing on the left there, which is primarily a lot  
19 of the retail that's happening today.

20 It's just this excessive variety. It's  
21 almost like fake architecture. It's successful.  
22 It's doing well. That's why it's getting built  
23 all over the place, but we don't really think that  
24 it really represents West Hartford's vision for  
25 this retail center.

1           So we're more focused on a consistent  
2       element, and as I start to go along in the  
3       presentation you'll see where these consistent  
4       elements start to take shape.

5           Here's a slide of some of the existing  
6       elevations that stand there today, and then you  
7       can see some of our process sketches that we've  
8       worked through to try to understand where the  
9       consistent elements would start to take shape.  
10      And of course, it's going to be the major tenants,  
11      Total Wine, Old Navy, Edge, Trader Joe's and Best  
12      Buy.

13           But when you start to break up those  
14      proportions and start to understand what's  
15      happening there's a rhythm that comes out of it,  
16      and you'll see on that lower image -- this is,  
17      kind of, a very early on sketch. So there's a  
18      couple more moves other than what's there now, but  
19      it starts to break it down into, kind of, an A, B,  
20      C -- almost a "D" read.

21           And when you look at those, that break down  
22      that and sort of determines the proportions of the  
23      scale for, you know, for an example A. And then  
24      the materiality that would be used, and then how  
25      it starts to go down to the B read. You know, A

1 always ends up being the anchor tenants; B the  
2 secondary tenants; and then what we're referring  
3 to as C is we're calling it, sort of, the tissue,  
4 which is really that existing back wall that  
5 exists there today.

6 When we first looked at the project we  
7 actually thought about completely removing the  
8 canopy. You know, it's 600 feet from the nail  
9 salon all the way down to Edge Fitness, and then  
10 from old Rossinalli's to the corner of Best Buy is  
11 another 600 feet. It's a pretty long elevation.

12 For us we thought, you know, we have to break  
13 it up somewhat and the consistent elements would  
14 be a good way of doing it. But what we realized  
15 when we took down the complete -- the entire  
16 canopy was that we almost just created the same  
17 thing that's out there today. We just pushed it  
18 back to that one wall.

19 So with a little bit of pushback from some of  
20 the tenants and wanting to have some protection  
21 for some of their carts like Trader Joe's and  
22 Total Wine and Best Buy, we felt that we can use  
23 some of the existing structure, start to save some  
24 money and keep the canopy where the major anchors  
25 are. So that would be the A read in those



1 elevations. So again, that's the Total Wine, Old  
2 Navy, Edge Fitness, Trader Joe's and Best Buy.

3 And then from there we have the secondary  
4 read, which goes down to the B read. And they  
5 have two different types of architectural styles,  
6 but it's a consistent element. The A is  
7 consistent. The B is consistent.

8 I think with keeping some of the canopy in  
9 some of these areas it allowed it to have some  
10 relief. You know, you often think back to, like,  
11 a town center, and what makes a town  
12 center successful. You know West Hartford  
13 especially is successful because of all the many  
14 layers of our history that's happened over time.  
15 And a lot of the in's and out's where there's  
16 little pockets for outdoor seating and then, you  
17 know, storefronts are set back. Some storefronts  
18 are brought up to the street.

19 So it really adds a nice dynamic as one is  
20 walking down the street. And when we start to  
21 think about how we can handle a similar approach  
22 with these consistent elements, you want to think  
23 of it as not being so much as just another typical  
24 strip mall off the side of the highway.

25 The thing about this, this shopping center is

1       it it's pushed back so far. It really does sit  
2       behind a sea of parking, and for the user  
3       experience the idea was to try to soften it up as  
4       much as possible so that it can be an enjoyable  
5       experience with them. By breaking apart the  
6       canopy and having those reliefs it allowed us to  
7       create little areas for streetlights, planters,  
8       benches, and it starts to allow activity to happen  
9       along that 600-foot element and they all terminate  
10      to that one corner where the pocket park is --  
11      which I'll get into a little bit later.

12           So here's some rendering views. This is  
13      looking down if you're -- actually Trader Joe's is  
14      right there to the right, and looking down at Edge  
15      Fitness with Old Navy off to the left there. So  
16      we've spent a lot of time detailing on how we're  
17      handling the surrounds.

18           It's really not a typical way of detailing  
19      these surrounds, and we've actually been working  
20      very closely with our construction team and  
21      Regency to really spend the money so that it  
22      really sets itself aside from what you're seeing  
23      in retail construction these days, and I'll get  
24      into some of the material choices in a couple  
25      slides.

1           So now this is looking if you're over by Old  
2 Navy looking at Edge Fitness, and then a possible  
3 tenant moving into Rossinalli's. So I don't know  
4 if anybody really remembers or have used that  
5 little space, that little wedge park in between  
6 Edge and Rossinalli's. It was a pretty scary  
7 spot. And you know, I know actually a lot of  
8 people in our office park there because it's  
9 easier for them just to get to Trader Joe's from  
10 that, behind the building. And they always say,  
11 it's kind of a scary space to walk through.

12           So there's been some improvements that were  
13 in the lease agreement with Edge. There's some  
14 new pavers down there. There's some catenary  
15 lighting, but once we get approval there's more  
16 that's going to be added to it.

17           There's going to be some outdoor seating.  
18 There's going to be site furniture. There's going  
19 to be planted berms, and then we're actually going  
20 to, you know, Regency is going to employ a local  
21 artist to do a nice mural.

22           And I'm sure some people here know the  
23 history of the whole Corbin's Company, but the  
24 start of the keys. So we'd like to go on the idea  
25 of maybe bringing back some history in this area

1 and have, you know, try to get the artist to  
2 integrate that whole theme of keys along that  
3 mural.

4 This next image gives it a little bit of  
5 appearance at night. So you can see the activity  
6 of people really, kind of, going in and out of  
7 those canopies, the streetlights, some of the  
8 benches, the planters.

9 In terms of lighting we have the anchor  
10 tenants. They have an LED strip at the very  
11 light. It does not spread glare up. It just  
12 keeps it within that zone, and it's almost a  
13 wayfinding for people who are driving on New  
14 Britain Ave.

15 Another thing, too. As you make your way  
16 down on the sidewalk there, there's ways of  
17 softening up the material read. You know, there  
18 is a lot of asphalt out there. There's a lot of  
19 concrete out there. You know, there's a lot of  
20 existing brick on the building now. Like I said,  
21 that's not in great shape, but we wanted to use  
22 some elements that can soften it up a little bit.

23 So under each canopy of major anchor  
24 tenants is a wood material with some recessed  
25 lanyard lighting to really allow for those areas

1 to glow at night and to be a safe environment.

2 These are just some of our construction  
3 drawings, and I have some materials laid out over  
4 here. I'll probably be off mic if I go to explain  
5 them. I will try to talk loud enough.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: I think you're going to have to be  
7 on the mic.

8 LUKE MAURO: Yeah. You think so? All right.

9 I'll use the laser pointer to point to them  
10 and see if that works.

11 So I guess what I'll start off with is it's  
12 the major anchor tenants right here. So we're  
13 using a fiber cement. It's not your typical fiber  
14 cement product that you'd see put on a residential  
15 house. It's a nine-inch reveal shiplap. So  
16 instead of sprinkling metal panel all over this  
17 thing we decided to have that horizontal line read  
18 with the shiplap material. It's a very fine joint  
19 and all you'll see is the lines.

20 And then with the columns, we have the  
21 columns that come up, and that same proportion  
22 kind of comes up, comes across the band and down.  
23 And again, that's the same material, just a  
24 different color. So we have a light gray that  
25 comes up around and down, and then the major sign

1 band what you see here is all in white. And then  
2 you can see those brown wood canopies that are  
3 underneath.

4 Now all the existing signage that's out there  
5 today, we'll reuse it. So there's no change in  
6 dimensions of this sign. It's all going to be  
7 torn down -- or not torn down. It's going to be  
8 taken down carefully and reused. And then what  
9 makes this a finer detail is there's a slight edge  
10 that comes up vertically and comes across, and its  
11 sort of bookends that, that larger consistent  
12 read.

13 It's like a nice fine detail to thin up the  
14 columns, you know, versus just mitering a corner  
15 of wrapping the same material around. It gives it  
16 a really, kind of, nice fine detail to it. All  
17 the bases have granite so that if carts run into  
18 it it's not going to fall apart. Fiber cement is  
19 actually a pretty durable material. You hit it  
20 with a hammer and it takes a hit pretty good.

21 So any carts that go out of control, it  
22 should be able to handle it fine. And again, that  
23 granite base is set up a little bit so that it  
24 will at least stop the major impact that would hit  
25 the columns.

1           Now on the secondary reads what you'll see up  
2 here we have a very similar read, just slightly  
3 different colors and then a little bit of a  
4 different material change. So that, that inner  
5 band right there is the same fiber cement product,  
6 that shiplap panel that's called James Hardie  
7 Aspen Edition, if you want to Google and check it  
8 out.

9           But instead of doing that same read that we  
10 had up here we went to a Hardie reveal panel. So  
11 it's a fiber cement panel with a reveal joint. So  
12 that it starts to give its own identity for that B  
13 read. And then what ties them together is that  
14 fine little edge in that granite base like we did  
15 on the major tenant.

16           Now the tissue, the tissue of the project has  
17 been, kind of, this ongoing conversation on how we  
18 handle it. When we first presented the job we  
19 thought, well, we'll just break it all down. And  
20 you know, we'll do brick. We'll do thin brick.

21           Because this place has gone through so many  
22 different renovations we don't know what we're  
23 going to open up in those walls and we just don't  
24 want the cost to also skyrocket because we're  
25 taking out brick to put up a thin brick. Okay.

1        So was that successful? No, it's not.

2                So we strategically took the time to find out  
3 where we could use brick appropriately so that the  
4 brick wasn't gone. So there's a nice tissue of in  
5 and out reads that happen between the brick and  
6 the edifice. And the brick we chose is a white  
7 brick. One is a smooth finish and the other is a  
8 wire cut. And you know, it's like a 50/50 mix so  
9 that it will -- when the masons hang it, they hang  
10 it pretty randomly.

11               But what it allows is it allows a nice shadow  
12 effect to happen on the brick because the wire cut  
13 picks up a different shadow than the shine, shiny  
14 brick. And the shiny brick allows a little bit of  
15 a reflection to happen.

16               So instead of having a very large brick wall  
17 that you see there it actually starts to animate  
18 itself in a way, and that becomes an area where  
19 there's some benches and planters that happen in  
20 that zone.

21               This box right here, you can see is that  
22 fiber cement. These aren't the colors we're  
23 using. It's just Hardie doesn't like to send you  
24 the colors you actually want without them charging  
25 you. And you know, we have -- I'm just showing



1       you here some metal and that's just because all  
2       the existing storefront that's out there now, it's  
3       black. We're not doing anything to existing  
4       storefront. We're not replacing doors. We're not  
5       replacing windows. Everything there is staying  
6       the way it looks. We're just re-cladding the  
7       exterior.

8               So now this moves us onto the restaurant  
9       which, you know, this theme was based on fitting  
10      the BJ's beer house into the design. Again, they  
11      don't have a signed lease yet, but when you're  
12      trying to attract these tenants the best thing to  
13      do is to focus the design on what they want.

14             Now I don't know if anyone has been to a BJ's  
15      Brewhouse here, but this is pretty much the  
16      opposite of their esthetic. And I know Regency  
17      and Amenta Emma has been working pretty hard to  
18      say, hey look. You know, we've spent a lot of  
19      time with this, this renovation and personally  
20      we'd like you to take some cues of what we're  
21      doing in the shopping center and using them,  
22      versus just putting up some architecture we might  
23      not like.

24             So they allowed us to work with the pallet,  
25      with the white brick, some of the wood, you know,

1 big windows. You know, try to break up the  
2 proportions a little bit differently than how the  
3 Jared's is there today. You can see some of their  
4 dumpster enclosure in the back, the use of murals,  
5 they'll animate it. We think it will be a really  
6 fine addition to the plaza and really nice gateway  
7 in. It could be a pretty attractive building  
8 compared to some of the out-parcel buildings there  
9 that I won't name, but you know, the material  
10 pallet is the same.

11 And then of course there's always the signage  
12 package that comes with it. Like I said, the  
13 signage on the existing signage that's out we're  
14 reusing, but we are proposing a new pylon sign.  
15 Now the pylon sign is still within the height  
16 restriction limits that are out there today. So  
17 it's not any taller.

18 It's actually not as wide as the one that's  
19 out there, but what we've worked out is that the  
20 tenant signs themselves are all going to remain  
21 the same dimension, but instead of having a bunch  
22 of sprinkled different colors that are quite  
23 confusing when cars are flying on New Britain Ave,  
24 we decided to do a monochrome.

25 It will still have their same font which is

1 pretty noticeable for most people, but the idea of  
2 having a more monochromatic color at least doesn't  
3 make it very confusing for someone to not  
4 understand it as they're driving by.

5 We also have some blade signs. So as, you  
6 know, like one would walking down a town you would  
7 see the blade signs that come off the building or  
8 hang from the canopies above. And those, those  
9 are currently out there today. I don't think  
10 anyone really notices them, but we're hoping that  
11 the ones that we're proposing, that they'll look a  
12 little bit more attractive and actually do what  
13 their purpose is.

14 And then -- Dave, you want to get back up?

15 DAVID GAGNON: Yeah, sure.

16 For the record, Dave Gagnon with Lagnan  
17 Engineering. Just really briefly I want to give  
18 you a flavor of what we're doing with the  
19 landscaping, lighting, site improvements  
20 throughout the site. This is just the basic plant  
21 image board you'll see on the site.

22 The shade trees, those will be within the  
23 parking field. Any parking spots we're touching  
24 we're going to have one of these shade trees in  
25 compliance with local regulations. So you're

1 going to see ginkgos. You're going to see red  
2 maples.

3 Ornamental trees, these are going to be in  
4 that pocket park which we talked about. They're  
5 going to be around the BJ's and also where there  
6 is a little grove in front of the existing Jared's  
7 of some of these river birches. We're going to be  
8 relocating those river birches to, kind of, the  
9 same general area, but not removing any of them.

10 And then throughout the site especially  
11 around the BJ's and in the pocket park you're  
12 going to see shrubs, ornamental grasses and ground  
13 cover. This is to give you kind of an idea of  
14 what that would look like.

15 And then site furnishings, these site  
16 furnishings will be along the facade, and of  
17 course in front of BJ's. We're going to have  
18 pedestrian scale lighting. This lighting is going  
19 to be, as Mark spoke to, along the facade. It's  
20 really just kind of to highlight what path you're  
21 supposed to be taking; twelve feet high,  
22 pedestrian scale, not very bright.

23 And then we have additional bike racks  
24 throughout the site. There's going to be one in  
25 the corner by that pocket park. There's going to

1 be one by the Best Buy and another station of bike  
2 racks by the proposed restaurant.

3 You're also going see new benches throughout  
4 the facade, and then we're going to have planter  
5 beds planted with seasonal plantings throughout  
6 the year. So this will give a flavor of what the  
7 site furnishings will look like.

8 And with that I'll hand it back over to the  
9 attorney.

10 MS. PEARSON: Thank you, David.

11 So that ends the technical presentation on  
12 the application. I'd like to just briefly address  
13 your attention to the outreach report which has  
14 been filed with the Council. There are extra  
15 copies should you wish paper copies, but the  
16 report went in -- I think it was almost a month  
17 ago.

18 The report indicates that the applicant sent  
19 a mailing out to the neighborhood surrounding SDD  
20 Number 6. It was sent to approximately 93  
21 property owners inviting them to a meeting on  
22 January 2nd for an opportunity to meet with the  
23 applicant and its consultants. It had the  
24 engineer there, the architect there and  
25 representatives from Regency.

1           The mailing to the neighbors was also quite  
2           informative. It described the application and had  
3           two renderings, one of the site plan and one of  
4           what the buildings would look like once the  
5           improvements were made to the facade. It also  
6           invited them to contact Regency if they had any  
7           reason that they would like to have a one-on-one  
8           personal meeting, or had any comments they would  
9           like to convey to the applicant.

10           The meeting took place on January 2nd. One  
11           neighbor did attend. That is noted in the  
12           materials you received. That neighbor indicated  
13           that he was pleased with the proposed changes to  
14           the facade and he liked the idea of having a  
15           restaurant added to the mix up at the front of the  
16           site.

17           We also provided to you two e-mails that we  
18           received prior to our mailing going out which  
19           weren't solicited by the mailing, but we think  
20           were just responsive to the posting of information  
21           about the application on the Town's website. And  
22           one person -- both of them were quite thoughtful  
23           and lengthy and I just want to summarize for you  
24           what they said.

25           The first person was concerned with the

1 elimination of the canopy. And I believe it was  
2 subsequent to that response, not directly in  
3 response to those comments, but that we made sure  
4 that there are still canopies as Marc Moura showed  
5 you with regard certainly to the major tenants.  
6 So there are protected areas in front of those  
7 stores. That individual indicated that they  
8 wanted a place to be able to get out of the  
9 elements.

10 And then the second, the second e-mail was  
11 from someone who said, gee, I don't think we need  
12 another restaurant. What we really need is to  
13 improve the size of Trader Joe's and have a larger  
14 Trader Joe's store.

15 So those comments are included. I will tell  
16 you that when I was here at the opening of the  
17 public hearing that was immediately continued at  
18 your last meeting there was someone in the  
19 audience who also reiterated, or said to me that  
20 she would be interested in having a dedicated  
21 space for electrical car charging behind the  
22 Trader Joe's store, and I did relay that  
23 information to my client.

24 And that is it for responses that we have had  
25 from the neighborhood, and any communications that

1 I've had with the town administration to check on  
2 what comments may have come in. I have indicated  
3 there have been no comments other than those from  
4 the tenants, and you are going to hear from their  
5 representative shortly with regard to these  
6 proposed improvements. So that's our outreach  
7 effort and those are the comments that we  
8 received.

9 With regard to the town reviews, two came in  
10 tonight. We had previously received engineering  
11 and planning signoffs, and I have been provided  
12 with two February 25th memorandums, one from the  
13 planner who said there are no -- planning division  
14 received the above referenced revised plans -- and  
15 those are the ones before you -- supporting  
16 information and narrative, and does not have any  
17 technical comments or concerns with the plan  
18 revisions.

19 And also one from Duane Martin, PE, Town  
20 Engineer, dated February 25th in which he said the  
21 engineering division reviewed the revised parking  
22 assessment dated February 24, 2020, for the  
23 1445-1459 New Britain Avenue proposed Corbin's  
24 Corner renovation, and have no comments. We find  
25 the parking assessment to be acceptable as it



1 identifies the parking demand associated with the  
2 proposed additions, and modifications to the  
3 shopping center will be accommodated.

4 You also have a Town Plan and Zoning  
5 Commission unanimous favorable review in which the  
6 Town Plan and Zoning Commission said the  
7 application is consistent with the current POCD  
8 goal to strengthen the community's tax base by  
9 promoting growth and retaining of existing  
10 businesses, and new development. And the  
11 commission also noted that the application is  
12 consistent with several recommended actions and  
13 the yet to be adopted draft of the POCD basically  
14 which is supportive of reinvestment in properties.

15 You have a report from the Design Review  
16 Advisory Committee which was very favorably  
17 inclined towards the application as designed by  
18 Amenta Emma and Langan Engineering. And indicated  
19 in their transmittal to you of January 21st that  
20 the applicant should be complemented on their  
21 commitment for the inclusion of local artists work  
22 as a design element of the project. The proposed  
23 architectural elements, materials and overall  
24 design is of high quality and the proposed design  
25 is sensitive to the human scale and will improve

1 the overall pedestrian experience within the  
2 shopping plaza.

3 Other reports that you have in the file, you  
4 have no objections by fire, by police, West  
5 Hartford/Bloomfield Health District. And you have  
6 a letter from the Metropolitan District indicating  
7 that sewer and water service are adequate.

8 Obviously, we'll need to pursue agreements  
9 with them for the actual physical connections to  
10 their lines, but in terms of servicing of the  
11 property everything has been satisfied as far as  
12 they're concerned.

13 So with regard to -- the application sets out  
14 the reasons as to why we also believe this  
15 application is consistent with the requirements  
16 for approval. Pursuant to Section 177-44 of your  
17 regulations I think it's fair to say that the  
18 application is in harmony with the overall  
19 objectives of the comprehensive plan, which is  
20 your zoning scheme.

21 It supports additional retail enhancements.  
22 It supports restaurant use which is a use that's  
23 allowed in the underlying zone, and is also  
24 present in the shopping center already and in SDD  
25 Number 6. It's complementary to other

1           developments in the area.

2           I think it's fair to say that the amount of  
3           design scrutiny this application has received is  
4           significant, and you can rely on your own Design  
5           Review Advisory Committee in terms of feeling  
6           comfortable that the design elements are of the  
7           highest quality, which is certainly a criteria  
8           that you must think about in deciding a special  
9           development district application. And we believe  
10          the proposed improvements will be in harmony with  
11          the existing department within Special Development  
12          District Number 6 because the only issue that  
13          really has come to the fore has to do with  
14          parking.

15          And at the end of the day there are still  
16          many spaces even during peak time that will remain  
17          vacant as far as our professional engineers have  
18          ascertained with regard to the use of this site  
19          with the new restaurant. And I believe it's fair  
20          to say that your town engineering staff agreed  
21          with our experts' assessment. So with that we  
22          would like to reserve an opportunity for rebuttal.

23   **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** I do have a question. On your  
24          coversheet you had said the applicant requests a  
25          waiver of Section 177-44C1A, requirement that all

1 owners to land and buildings within a special  
2 development district sign any application to amend  
3 an SDD -- and you had said something.

4 Could you explain that a little bit and if  
5 you've heard anything back?

6 MS. PEARSON: You're asking for the waivers?

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes.

8 MS. PEARSON: They're not waivers, but to just go  
9 through exactly what it is that doesn't comply at  
10 the moment?

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Right. What you did ultimately?

12 MS. PEARSON: David, on the special development  
13 district zoning chart, what if any waivers were  
14 requested? And I think they would deal with the  
15 proximity of the setback along New Britain Avenue.  
16 I know that was one thing we were originally  
17 looking for.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, I'm specifically referring to --  
19 I think you need to go over that, but I'm  
20 referring to I think the letter mailed that all  
21 the -- to the land and buildings owner sign?

22 MS. PEARSON: Oh, the original?

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Right.

24 MS. PEARSON: Oh, I'm sorry.

25 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Way back to January -- oh, December.

1           Sorry.

2   MS. PEARSON:   December.   That's why.   We did send the  
3           materials to Seritage under the name of the entity  
4           that actually owns the northern part of Special  
5           Development District Number 6.   We also followed  
6           up with e-mail transmittal.

7           I have had several communications with  
8           Attorney Hayes who was their land-use counsel when  
9           they came in for the improvements to their portion  
10          of SDD Number 6 a while back.   And she also  
11          communicated with the -- with Seritage folks and  
12          authorized me to say that Seritage did not  
13          indicate to her that they had any objections, and  
14          that I could so represent that to you.

15          You'll note in the application that we are  
16          proposing to add three parking spaces on a portion  
17          of the property that is owned by Seritage.   That  
18          would refine the driveway in that particular area  
19          and add some additional parking.   We've had  
20          informal discussions with them, representatives of  
21          Seritage through Rebecca Wing who has met with  
22          them informally, it's fair to say, at the ICSC  
23          conference out of Las Vegas earlier this year.  
24          And they indicated they would have no objection.

25          We do not have a formal signoff from them

1       that we can do, add those three changes, but as is  
2       noted on the plans we will not be able to do so  
3       unless they say we can do it, but we have no  
4       reason to believe that that will not come to pass.  
5       So that is the extent of our communications with  
6       Seritage and I apologize for being confused.

7   PRESIDENT CANTOR:  No, I should have stated the date,  
8       because if this was a while ago.  So I appreciate  
9       that.

10  MS. PEARSON:  It was right at the time of application  
11       submission in December.

12  PRESIDENT CANTOR:  Thank you.  We will go to the  
13       sign-up sheet and the presentation of -- I think  
14       there might be a group of people that might want  
15       to speak.

16               But I will actually see if any of my  
17       Councilors have any questions so far.  I'm sure  
18       we'll have more.

19               Mr. Davidoff?

20  COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:  Attorney Pearson, you were going  
21       to allude to other waivers with respect to this  
22       particular application.  I didn't see any in your  
23       materials.

24  MS. PEARSON:  My engineer is indicating to me there are  
25       none.  So we're all set.

1 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: I just wanted to make sure that's  
2 on the record.

3 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you. Any other questions?

4  
5 (No response.)  
6

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. So I don't know if -- I had  
8 heard that a few people wanted to come up  
9 together. So I have Melissa Harris. I'll say the  
10 first three.

11 David Sullivan, Vincent Sansone. So I have  
12 Stanger Stanfield, Milone & MacBroom and Edge  
13 Fitness, and then I have Richard Shelton from R&R  
14 Realty. And then there's Christopher Vaso from  
15 Edge Fitness, and then there's a couple other  
16 people. So I don't know if a few of you are  
17 coming up together?

18 MS. PEARSON: And I'm going to ask them whether -- I  
19 assume you'd like our screen up -- oh, you want in  
20 down? Okay. All right.

21 And did you want it on a particular plan, or  
22 do you have something to add? You have your own.  
23 Okay.

24 So Marc, I don't know if there's anything I  
25 should do with this computer that's sitting on the

1 desk.

2 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Attorney Pearson and  
3 team.

4 MS. HARRIS: Good evening. For the record my name is  
5 Melissa Harris. I'm from Stanger Stanfield and I  
6 have the pleasure of representing Edge Fitness and  
7 R&R Realty doing business as Red Robin.

8 As I said, good evening, Madam Mayor and  
9 members of the Town Council. Just by way of  
10 business, my understanding is I heard the rules  
11 with regard to time. My understanding before  
12 coming here today is we would have a total of 20  
13 minutes.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: I'm sure that that will be fine.

15 There's four or five of you signed up, and say,  
16 five minutes each. And the room is not filled  
17 with people who want to speak. So thank you.

18 MS. HARRIS: Great. Thank you. We are here today to  
19 object to the application, but specifically only  
20 with regard to the application where it seeks to  
21 change the Jared's building from a retail use to a  
22 restaurant use.

23 We have sat here today and we have seen a  
24 great presentation from Marc with regard to the  
25 architectural plans. We have no objection with



1 regard to the changes that are made to Trader  
2 Joe's, but what we do have an objection to is the  
3 parking. Okay?

4 We've heard today that there's going to be  
5 enough parking in the district, but the question  
6 is, where is that parking going to be? Right?  
7 There's a total -- or going to be a total of over  
8 16,000 spaces in Corbin's Corner Center and in  
9 collection, which is that northern area.

10 So while we say we're not going to consider  
11 that northern area, that parking space is included  
12 in the analysis. I don't know about you, but I'm  
13 not going to park at Saks Fifth Avenue to go to  
14 Trader Joe's. It just doesn't make sense.

15 It's parking, it's traffic, and correlated  
16 with that is safety issues. That's our concern  
17 and we hope that that's your concern as well in  
18 determining whether or not to change the use from  
19 a low-impact traffic and parking user of retail  
20 use, which according to the ITE is 37 at its  
21 highest, to a high-impact traffic and parking  
22 user, a restaurant use which is 121 according to  
23 the ITE.

24 Now I ask the Councilmembers to take in  
25 consideration the purpose of zoning. Right?

1 That's what we're here for tonight. We're trying  
2 to guide the growth and development of the Town of  
3 West Hartford, but part of that is a consideration  
4 of the stability of each area for such use as  
5 indicated by existing conditions.

6 These are your existing conditions. And for  
7 the record I'm pointing to the slide here we have  
8 of the parking at Corbin's Corner. And what this  
9 is showing is peak hours. Peak hours for the  
10 restaurant are going to be the same peak hours for  
11 Edge. Right? You're going after work,  
12 five o'clock to seven o'clock. As you can see,  
13 the parking is already spilling into the Jared's  
14 lot.

15 I hope that you will take consideration of  
16 the fact that this property does not support and  
17 is not conducive to the increased intensity that  
18 this restaurant is going to bring. When we took a  
19 look at this application we were concerned. We  
20 were concerned for the totality of our own  
21 businesses, and the business that are already here  
22 at the center.

23 There's already a parking issue. There was a  
24 parking issue in 2005 when Red Robin came into the  
25 property. I'm not asking you to consider the

1 terms of their lease, but it was brought up  
2 because it was a concern. And it was a concern in  
3 2019 when Edge came into the property. And since  
4 then -- let's be honest, Edge has only created  
5 additional parking issues at the center.

6 You're going to hear today from David  
7 Sullivan, he's the Manager of Traffic and  
8 Transportation Planning from Milone & MacBroom.  
9 We got him involved because we looked at the  
10 Langan traffic study and we said there are some  
11 issues with this. There are some issues, because  
12 we know what's going in there. Right? We have a  
13 BJ's going in there. And we know that there's a  
14 BJ's in Manchester, and we know the kind of  
15 business they're bringing in.

16 So we had our traffic engineer take a look  
17 and compare the Manchester BJ's and the Red Robin  
18 Manchester location to estimate the parking impact  
19 this BJ's is actually going to have on the center,  
20 and the results are quite astonishing.

21 Up to 170 parking spaces. Where are these  
22 people going to park? We're going to be at full  
23 capacity in some of these areas of parking. I ask  
24 you not to look at this parking as a whole, the  
25 1,000 spaces stretched out over however many

1        acres, but I'm asking you to consider the area  
2        around where this proposed high intensity use is  
3        going to be. And make a determination, can it fit  
4        there?

5                And I think you'll see after Mr. Sullivan's  
6        presentation, it's not going to. It's not  
7        possible. This is not a proper location. Can it  
8        support a retail use? Maybe, probably, but this  
9        high-impact traffic parking user, it cannot.

10                You did get a copy of my letter and I  
11        apologize that it only came to you this morning.  
12        Just by way of a bit of a summary, edge Fitness  
13        intends to increase its membership. So the  
14        parking as it is today is only going to increase.  
15        Langan had indicated the results of the parking  
16        for Edge were skewed because it was January.  
17        Well, they had just opened. Their membership has  
18        increased and it's only intending to increase over  
19        time. It's intending to double between now and  
20        the next year or two.

21                The hard facts are that Edge has, during its  
22        peak current hours of operation in any one-hour  
23        timeframe, between -- let me see my numbers.

24                There's up to about 201 check-ins. So you  
25        have a lot of people coming in and out of Edge,

1 and that's just going to increase.

2 133 to 201 members checking in in a one-hour  
3 period. That doesn't count 28 employees parking  
4 there, and it doesn't include the people who are  
5 coming as guests, and it doesn't include all these  
6 people who are coming to check it out. So there  
7 are a lot of cars that Edge is bringing in, and  
8 it's just going to get more and more.

9 But the problem is, how are they going to  
10 expand if there's no room for people to park?  
11 Right? That's a concern.

12 The other concern is, you have no room to  
13 park. Maybe that won't affect your high-end  
14 anchor tenants, but what about all the little  
15 guys? If you can't find parking, why are you  
16 going to frequent the center? Right? So we  
17 brought up the economics of it. All right? So  
18 we'll put in a restaurant.

19 Listen, we don't mind seeing the building not  
20 vacant, but the restaurant is going to impact  
21 everybody else. You as Councilmembers have the  
22 ability to use your own insight, your own  
23 knowledge of this area in making this decision.  
24 If you've been there you know how congested it is.

25 The other issue that we have with the

1 application is a determination that there's no  
2 need for a traffic study. Because supposedly  
3 there's only going to be less than 100 cars coming  
4 in and out at any given hour. Again, we know from  
5 our traffic study that Mr. Sullivan will talk  
6 about that there could be up to 170 cars there at  
7 any time. That alone I think warrants a traffic  
8 study.

9 But not only that, here's the problem. We're  
10 doing this in piecemeal. Right? Edge just got  
11 approved a few months back, a huge high-end  
12 traffic/parking generator. Now we're adding this  
13 other high-end use parking generator, but you know  
14 what? Let's not do a traffic study. At some  
15 point there needs to be a consideration of the  
16 overall cumulative impact that adding these high  
17 traffic/parking generators have on the center, and  
18 determine whether or not New Britain Ave with  
19 intersections even, you know, the roadways heading  
20 into Corbin's center can accommodate that. Right?

21 And this all leads to a safety issue. The  
22 more congestion you have, the more safety issues  
23 you're going to have. And we know -- and I've  
24 included this in my letter, that there's been  
25 quite a few reported vehicular accidents in

1 Corbin's Corner over the last 5 years, 26  
2 vehicular accidents in Corbin's Corner. What  
3 hasn't been reported? Right?

4 So now you have a hundred percent occupancy  
5 in some areas of Corbin's Corner. That's just  
6 going to compound the issues, nevermind the fact  
7 that if you're constantly looking for a parking  
8 spot you're not paying attention to pedestrians.

9 You'll hear from the representative here from  
10 Red Robin and the representative from Edge, and  
11 you'll hear how they're already impacted from the  
12 parking situation at Corbin's Corner, and how they  
13 fear it's going to affect them by allowing this  
14 change in use. After you hear from them and after  
15 you hear from Mr. Sullivan I ask that you consider  
16 the POCD and your role again that we talked about.

17 The POCD on page 78 says that higher economic  
18 uses of commercial properties should be encouraged  
19 where the physical land characteristics,  
20 transportation conditions and infrastructure are  
21 conducive to increased intensity. I ask you to  
22 remember that, and that you make a determination  
23 that this property is not conducive to this  
24 increased intensity by allowing the change in use  
25 from retail to restaurant use.

1           Thank you.

2   PRESIDENT CANTOR:   Thank you.

3           Next, David Sullivan.

4   DAVID SULLIVAN:   Good evening.   Again, my name is David  
5           Sullivan.   I'm with Milone & MacBroom, a  
6           professional engineer and I manage traffic and  
7           transportation planning.   We were contacted a  
8           couple weeks ago and asked to look at this  
9           situation and we did, we did just that.   What  
10          you'll see is we took a little different approach  
11          than Langan did.   In fact, you'll see it's  
12          different in three ways as I go through it.

13                 First, our analysis is based on almost  
14                 exclusively empirical data.   We didn't rely on  
15                 statistical data, industry data, shared parking  
16                 theories and things like that.

17                 The second thing you'll notice is our focus  
18                 area was not the entire SDD.   We did count the  
19                 entire SDD just to validate their counts, but then  
20                 when we did our analysis, which I'll go through,  
21                 we focused on just the southeast, the part of the  
22                 shopping center that this application is about.

23                 And the third thing you'll see through the  
24                 presentation is our findings are different.   I  
25                 didn't do a peer review of their study, but I do



1 know that the conclusion is that with the changes  
2 and the restaurant coming there, I think if I have  
3 this right, they're projecting an increase of 40  
4 parked vehicles. We're coming up with a much  
5 larger number than that, and I'll go through how  
6 we did that.

7 The first is just some housekeeping things.  
8 The parking counts were done on Thursday and  
9 Saturday a couple weeks ago. We identified the  
10 peak hours of two count periods to be on Thursday  
11 night 6 to 7 p.m. And as I mentioned, we did  
12 compare their counts to our counts and in general  
13 they weren't exact, of course, but they were very  
14 close. So we're comfortable with all the data  
15 that's been provided.

16 The five areas that we're focusing on are the  
17 ones south of that, I'll call it that spine road  
18 that separates the two shopping centers. And  
19 you'll see where these letters correlate. They're  
20 the same letters that they used in their report  
21 and they will be in our graphics as well. And  
22 just showing you quickly what the capacity of some  
23 of those lots are. D and E for example, are the  
24 ones right up front of Edge, for example.

25 We looked also at the BJ's restaurant in

1 Manchester. So we counted that at the same time  
2 on Thursday and Saturday, the 13th and 15th. We  
3 found on the Thursday peak hour there were 136  
4 cars parked at BJ's in Manchester, 130 on  
5 Saturday. The Langan projection, again just for a  
6 little bit of context, when they adjusted for  
7 their Saturday I think they said it was 60 or  
8 something like that. So you can see where we have  
9 a different basis that we're dealing with.

10 As we were doing this we were told by the Red  
11 Robin owners that the Manchester side is a lesser  
12 market than will be here in West Hartford. And I  
13 said, well, that's great. It's kind of anecdotal.

14 And he said, well, I'll give you some of my  
15 sales data. So they gave us a year's worth of  
16 sales data for Manchester and West Hartford, which  
17 showed the difference of about 30 percent in their  
18 West Hartford location.

19 I said, that's great, but let's try to see if  
20 we can replicate those findings. So when we did  
21 the counts we counted their Manchester and West  
22 Hartford Red Robin parking, and we found an  
23 increase of about 25 percent in the Red Robin  
24 traffic.

25 For Edge Fitness, right now they have about

1        5,000 members during that peak hour which I  
2        believe was six to seven o'clock. You know, there  
3        are 201 sign-ins. That's the people who go in,  
4        swipe your card and then you go work out. Before  
5        and after that, you know, it was lesser, but it  
6        was still in the upper hundreds as you go back an  
7        hour, and you know, very substantial.

8                And they also have 28 employees, I think, and  
9        they said they were doing tours, but they don't  
10       have any counting of that. Nonetheless we said,  
11       well, how are we going to determine how many of  
12       the people we counted parking in front there, how  
13       many can we determine are Edge counters?

14               So the one empirical way we could do it is to  
15       look at our counts in the couple of lots in front  
16       of Edge and look at the counts we did versus the  
17       December counts that Langan did and see if we can  
18       identify a difference. We identified a difference  
19       of 180. We used that number -- I think that's  
20       conservative, because their December counts had  
21       some seasonal increases which were probably in  
22       play. Plus you know, just the 201 sign-ins, the  
23       employees and whatnot, 180 seemed like it was very  
24       conservative.

25               Their expected membership is going to double.

1 Again, we asked for some information on that, that  
2 doubling and they gave us some anecdotal historic  
3 data of some of their other high producing clubs,  
4 and where they went from the month to the end of  
5 the year. And a doubling of the membership in a  
6 year or thereabouts seemed reasonable based on  
7 that data, but we still felt uncomfortable  
8 doubling the 180 car parking. So we said, let's  
9 do a 50 percent increase of that traffic during  
10 the peak hour.

11 By the way, one other thing here is the  
12 Langan January counts, there was some indication  
13 it was skewed. Our counts and Langan's January  
14 counts were nearly identical for those two  
15 periods. So if there was a skew because of the  
16 grand opening, the membership growth has caught up  
17 to that already, so.

18 Okay. So this is where we get into trying to  
19 visualize what's happening here, and you can see D  
20 is right in front. The only difference between  
21 the Langan report; we broke D into D1, D2; and F  
22 into 2 and E into 2.

23 And you can see, this isn't exactly where  
24 they were parking. The blue indicates the  
25 percentage of the lot that was full.

1           And you can see -- and I won't run through  
2           every number, but D2 -- D1, D2. D1, they're all  
3           pretty full. So is G. And it was interesting  
4           because I would have expected G not to be full  
5           because it's back of house, such as the back of  
6           the house on the right side of Edge, but there's a  
7           little walkway that you can get through to Edge.  
8           So it's interesting. So people have learned to  
9           park back there at this point.

10           So those are the existing parking conditions.  
11           Then we said, well, let's take the Manchester BJ's  
12           as is, no increase or no volumetric increase for  
13           the market conditions, and this is what it would  
14           do.

15           So as you can see, F1 which is the lot right  
16           where BJ's would be is full. Start pushing into  
17           F2. D1 becomes completely full. E2, still full.  
18           E1 starts getting closer to full. D2, a little  
19           bit of spilling over. We're trying to show it  
20           graphically, but some of it would probably spill  
21           over into D2.

22           Then we said, well, what if they're right  
23           about the market and it's going to be 25 percent  
24           greater here? So we said, well, let's increase  
25           BJ's 25 percent. So we did that here.

1           As you can see, pushing farther into F2,  
2 further into D2. E, when it's almost full starts  
3 spilling a little bit into H which is where the  
4 Red Robin is. And this lot, again is getting  
5 fuller and full.

6           Now we said, what happens if, in fact, the  
7 Edge traffic, those 180 increases by 50 percent?  
8 Well, essentially the entire lots, D, E, F and G  
9 become full and the only available parking is that  
10 far corner in the far lower south end of the Red  
11 Robin.

12           So a couple things. When we're designing and  
13 when we're analyzing parking lots we like to  
14 target our design for 85 to 90 percent occupancy  
15 for normal times of year. This is about as normal  
16 time a year as you can get. The end of  
17 February the weather was copacetic, nothing  
18 extreme in either case. It's not a holiday  
19 season. It's not the peak gym season, all those  
20 New Year's Eve resolutions already faded out. So  
21 this is really as normal and typical as we can get  
22 a snapshot of.

23           So if in fact, the counts we did in  
24 Manchester are in fact on the low side, and if in  
25 fact the conservative estimates of Edge growth

1 comes to fruition this lot really has very little  
2 capacity. Obviously, there's not the 90 percent,  
3 so you're going to have additional cars  
4 circulating looking for parking spaces. That's  
5 one of the reasons we like to have 10 percent  
6 vacancy minimum.

7 The last thing is -- and I just don't want it  
8 to go unsaid. When they talk about the 1600  
9 parking spaces, 16-something in the SDD, I guess  
10 it's called, and they talk about their projection  
11 of being 1,060 demand -- so that if I do my math,  
12 that's some 600 vacant spaces.

13 When we did our counts it was between four  
14 and 500 vacant spaces north of this graphic. So I  
15 think the analysis has to be focused on this area.  
16 And I guess what it comes down to -- Edge and Red  
17 Robin will be coming up and hopefully be giving  
18 you some comfortable level that the projections  
19 that we made are based in valid data.

20 So that's my presentation.

21 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you, Mr. Sullivan.

22 The next person is Vincent Sansone. And so  
23 we're at about 35 minutes now. We're happy to  
24 hear from you, but if you could keep your comments  
25 a little tighter? Thank you.

1 VINCENT SANSONE: Good evening, everyone. Vincent  
2 Sansone, Founder and President Edge Fitness. It  
3 seems like the other day I was up here in front of  
4 the Council in this room.

5 The reason that I'm here -- and by the way,  
6 this picture is taken during the day. We have  
7 more cars at night. For anybody that's been to  
8 our clubs or here at night, you know what I'm  
9 talking about.

10 I mean, anybody that goes to this lot, to me  
11 I can't even imagine putting a high intensive  
12 restaurant use with a bar so they stay later on  
13 top of what we're doing.

14 Just to give some context of what  
15 Mr. Sullivan said, our West Hartford club -- and  
16 it took me 30 years to get into West Hartford. We  
17 knew it was going to be a homerun -- is rivaling  
18 our best clubs in our chain which currently is at  
19 32 clubs right now. It's right up there, and West  
20 Hartford to me is like our Fairfield club. It's  
21 rivaling the ramp we're having. So 10,000 members  
22 by the end of this year is very doable.

23 As of this study last week we said we were  
24 about 500. We're already at over 5200 members  
25 now. So I don't know if any of you people are



1 members that come to the gym, but you can see how  
2 busy we're getting.

3 It's a little weird for me because we're a  
4 new tenant, and I know Regency said you guys are  
5 going to spend 7 million. We spent over 5 million  
6 here based on the fact that we were very careful  
7 to protect our parking. We were never told you  
8 were going to put a high-intensity restaurant use  
9 here, zero, never -- but we protected our parking.

10 And one of the things that I want to clear up  
11 is -- because I don't want to be the bad guy is --  
12 and you guys did a great job on your presentation.  
13 And Attorney Pearson, I expect that from you  
14 because we know each other, but changing that  
15 drive lane, what they fail to tell you is when the  
16 landlord presented that the reason we objected to  
17 it is because it amounted to less spots in the  
18 area that they've just presented, not more.

19 So we said, how can we have a high-intensity  
20 parking user as a restaurant bar come in here?  
21 You guys change the aisleway and we get less  
22 spots.

23 The other is anybody that shops at Trader  
24 Joe's, you guys know you can't even park there.  
25 As a matter of fact, on that sliver we tell our

1 members, we have signs in the gym that you can't  
2 park there. So if they were going to change the  
3 drive aisle, give us less spots, they would have  
4 pushed our main parking even farther away from our  
5 members.

6 We have thousands of West Hartford residents  
7 as members, thousands, obviously because that's  
8 where we're located. They're very concerned with  
9 this. They were concerned of us coming in to  
10 begin with; that parking was going to be tight and  
11 we assured them, you know, there's a large parking  
12 field. You get to use the parking.

13 You know, we had them light up the alleyway  
14 which is full all the time. Again, I welcome any  
15 of you guys to come between five and eight o'clock  
16 at night and see what this lot is really like. No  
17 matter what their data says you have to look at it  
18 realistically.

19 So my reason I'm here is we're a new  
20 business. We spent a lot of money here. We have  
21 a lot of residents that are very concerned and  
22 this is going to negatively impact, not just us,  
23 but all these other users, as Attorney Harris  
24 said.

25 So the increase is real. We are -- health

1 clubs, normally anywhere you go a successful  
2 health club is a very high intense parking user,  
3 which typically on a lot that's already tight,  
4 another high user like a restaurant bar is not a  
5 good mix. There's going to be a lot of driving  
6 around. There's going to be problems in the lot.  
7 We already hear it from our members now, and  
8 that's one of the reasons I'm up here.

9 I don't want to come against our landlord and  
10 fight them on the application unless I believed  
11 and knew based on where we're going as a business  
12 that it was going to, not only negatively impact  
13 us, but also our members.

14 They're going to be frustrated. They're  
15 going to be angry. They're going to be late  
16 getting to their appointment, late getting into  
17 the group exercise class. We heard from our  
18 members now that go to Trader Joe's. Oh, my God.  
19 I can't even find a place to park. Yes, you have  
20 to park way out by the bank.

21 And West Hartford is my home club, so I use  
22 this club on the weekends. I use it at night.  
23 We're parking out now by the Jared's by the bank.  
24 Again, I welcome anybody to go there no matter  
25 what their data says, go there and see it for real

1       because you'll see that that's the truth.

2               So the reason again I objected to the drive  
3       aisle, we have a no-build zone in our lease that  
4       prevents them from reducing our parking or  
5       changing any driver access that's going to  
6       negatively impact us, and that's why we did that.

7               I love all the improvements they're making.  
8       As a matter of fact, we're doing another deal with  
9       them in Delaware. So nothing against the  
10      landlord, but this is going to have a --  
11      unbelievably be a disastrous effect, nevermind  
12      what November through Christmas is going to be  
13      like.

14              We weren't there in December. You guys  
15      probably shopped there and went by there. That's  
16      not even including us in there. And I'm glad you  
17      pointed out, Dave, on the parking, because I know  
18      they tried to lower our count. We're doing more  
19      check-ins now in February than we were back in the  
20      grand opening, or January.

21              And like I said, I compared our top five  
22      clubs, highest trafficked in West Hartford already  
23      is up there with those clubs and it's ramping, one  
24      of our best ramps in the history of our company.  
25      So I don't want to take a lot of time, but I just

1 want to leave you with this one thing.

2 And again, Regency did a great presentation.  
3 I hope they do all the improvements. You know,  
4 it's going to be a disaster if that restaurant  
5 goes in, restaurant bar.

6 So here's what I'm thinking. If they're  
7 wrong on their counts and they're wrong on what  
8 it's going to be like, what happens to them?  
9 Nothing. It's us, our members, the other tenants,  
10 our customers. We're the ones that are going to  
11 pay the price.

12 And like I said, we spent over \$5 million.  
13 We just opened December 21st. None of this was  
14 ever discussed with us. As a matter of fact, I  
15 didn't even know about these meetings. We had  
16 members come to us and said, you guys better get  
17 involved in this. They want to put a restaurant  
18 bar in your parking lot.

19 I called the landlord, and he called us and  
20 said, I'm sorry. It's my fault that I didn't  
21 alert you guys at all. So to me that's --  
22 something is trying to be hid there. So I hope  
23 that anybody that knows this town, knows that  
24 parking lot, sees the type of business we're  
25 doing. And remember, we're only at 5200 members

1 right now. We will be at 10,000 by the end of  
2 this year because we're modeling with our other  
3 clubs.

4 So we have many clubs that are over 10,000  
5 members. So that, putting a bar restaurant there  
6 is just going to make it a nightmare for  
7 everybody. That's what I have to say.

8 Thank you for your time.

9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Sansone.

10 Richard Shelton is next.

11 And I would ask -- and I think this would be  
12 for Attorney Harris, that whatever pictures are  
13 not submitted with your letter just make sure that  
14 they are submitted. Thank you.

15 RICHARD SHELTON: Yeah, in fact I hope somebody -- in  
16 the package will see this and what pictures of the  
17 parking lot.

18 If I knew we were running so late I would  
19 have brought some food in from Red Robin, so I  
20 apologize.

21 The truth of the matter is, it's February.  
22 This is probably the mildest winter we've had in  
23 forever. If any of you remember there usually are  
24 mountains of snow probably occupying 15 to 30  
25 parking spaces in Corbin's Corner, and it sits

1       there until late spring. It just sits there. So  
2       just as a point, this happens to be the mildest  
3       modest winter you can think of.

4               Also we all know that retail is quiet this  
5       time of year. From our point of view one of the  
6       experiences that we're having with Edge coming in  
7       is that we experienced between two and five  
8       shopping carts that are in our parking lot. So  
9       every morning or afternoon we have to bring the  
10      carts back to Trader Joe's, because it's occupying  
11      some parking spaces of ours and it's a parking  
12      hazard. I can't imagine how many shopping carts  
13      are out in the middle of nowhere because people  
14      can't park near Trader Joe's. So they go out,  
15      they come back to their car and they leave their  
16      shopping carts.

17             In the charts that you saw of the parking lot  
18      you saw that Red Robin's "H" was the quietest one  
19      of all. The reason why is we are a family  
20      restaurant and we basically fill up on Saturday  
21      nights. That's when the families go out.

22             And so one of the results is that we have 136  
23      parking spaces. On Saturday nights, holidays,  
24      during the Christmas holidays we're full. Now we  
25      have 220 parking spaces -- 220 seats in our

1 restaurant. BJ's with the outside seating is  
2 going to have 306. We average three people per  
3 car that come into our restaurant. BJ's has less  
4 than two. So you can see that they're just going  
5 to eat up a lot of parking. And so we're  
6 convinced that they're going to be using 200 to  
7 250 parking spaces when they're full.

8 This is a high-impact high-use restaurant.  
9 It is not the best thing for the shopping center.  
10 It's going to put a stranglehold on people getting  
11 in out of the shopping center. And I think what  
12 Vinny said before, the best thing you can do is  
13 Monday through Thursday go to the shopping center  
14 anytime between six and eight o'clock and you will  
15 see that there is no parking, and this is going to  
16 be compounded greatly by the addition of a  
17 restaurant. Thank you.

18 And please look at the pictures, because  
19 there are some more photos that show how tight it  
20 is.

21 **PRESIDENT CANTOR:** Thank you, Mr. Shelton. Yes, for  
22 the packet, the pictures, but whatever is not in  
23 there make sure that we have for our records.

24 And then next I have Christopher B-E-S-T-O-N,  
25 Beston.



1 CHRISTOPHER BESTON: I'm all set. Thank you.

2 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. And then signed up, I don't  
3 know. I don't think -- Marc, you're all set.

4 MARC MOURA: Oh, yeah. I'm sorry. I thought it was  
5 just a sign-in.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: That's okay.

7 Judy Allen. Remember, state your name and  
8 address for the record.

9 JUDY ALLEN: Judy Allen, 25 Fowler Drive.

10 I kept looking for my house in there, but I  
11 couldn't find it. I live just outside. I'm one  
12 house away from the area that has to be notified,  
13 but my neighbor gets a notification. So I show up  
14 for her, and I'm showing up for my entire  
15 neighborhood. I have lived there since before  
16 there was a Sears, and this was a farmland. So  
17 I've watched the development.

18 Two things are important. The removal of the  
19 canopy in some places. Again going to my neighbor  
20 who is in a wheelchair and you remember that I  
21 talked a lot when Shake Shack went in about having  
22 the gate wide for people to go through. People  
23 need cover, now especially she needs cover. She's  
24 not going in and out of a car. She's going down,  
25 she's going down the entire length, and in bad

1 weather that's a problem for her.

2 It's a problem for me. I don't like to have  
3 to walk in the rain, but you know, if I don't have  
4 to carry an umbrella.

5 The other thing is I'm an electric car driver  
6 and I'm the one that brought up the electric car  
7 charging station. And it's important to me that  
8 West Hartford continue to be a sustainable town,  
9 and if you want to do that you have got to build  
10 out electric car charging stations.

11 If you want people to switch to things like  
12 electric cars you have to make charging stations  
13 available. I have heard people guess that, well,  
14 you have a charging station at home. Well, yeah,  
15 that's great, but you've got a certain limit on  
16 where you can drive. And if you want to go to  
17 someplace that is going to run you out of  
18 electricity you need a charging station.

19 The other thing to consider is that a  
20 charging station, you're there for maybe an hour  
21 or two hours. You're shopping while you're using  
22 that charging station. This could be an  
23 additional revenue for the area.

24 One other thing. Because I have lived there  
25 forever and because my neighbor and I are sort of

1 sensitive to being in Elmwood, and sort of  
2 resistant to wanting to be kind of dragged into  
3 everything being like West Hartford Center. And  
4 so when I hear that you want to spiff something up  
5 because it doesn't fit the overall West Hartford  
6 feel, you know, improvements are nice, but we  
7 don't necessarily want to look like the rest of  
8 West Hartford. Like I said, upgrades are nice,  
9 but consider the neighborhood that it's in.

10 I don't quite understand that mural. I don't  
11 know what keys are, but if you really look at the  
12 history of the center, you see something of the  
13 history of the development of Elmwood as well.  
14 And a lot of the neighbors walk there. They don't  
15 drive.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Judy.

17 Is there anybody else in the audience that  
18 would like to speak to this application?

19  
20 (No response.)

21  
22 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. All right. Attorney Pearson,  
23 do you want to continue, or come on up for  
24 questions?

25 LUKE MAURO: Just wanted to leave the picture up.

1 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Just state your name for the record.

2 LUKE MAURO: Sorry. Luke Mauro with Langan

3 Engineering, traffic engineer for the project.

4 Just one note about this picture before they  
5 take the laptop back. I want everyone to notice  
6 that the area where we're putting the restaurant  
7 pad in, it's not shown. Right? It's on the  
8 bottom left corner, although you see maybe seven  
9 or eight parked cars, parked there, if you were to  
10 zoom out -- and I believe we have another photo  
11 that was sent to us showing that area. It's  
12 pretty much vacant.

13 So although this does show heavy occupancy in  
14 some of these areas closer to Edge and Trader  
15 Joe's, what you can see in this picture is there's  
16 likely a great amount of vacant parking spaces  
17 that are not shown just outside of the  
18 frame there.

19 RICHARD SHELTON: Could I counter that?

20 PRESIDENT CANTOR: No, you can't. Sorry. That's the  
21 public hearing. We have already received your  
22 comments. Thank you.

23 MR. MATHEWS: Madam Mayor, just a point of  
24 clarification. Is this the rebuttal period? Or  
25 what are we doing?

1 PRESIDENT CANTOR: So, no. Yeah -- well, actually the  
2 applicant is allowed to come back up and finish.  
3 We can ask further questions that came up in  
4 public comment and they will close, and then we  
5 will close the public hearing.

6 LUKE MAURO: Okay. Just for context -- and this wasn't  
7 a photo taken by us. This was a photo -- I'm not  
8 quite sure who. I believe it was -- I don't know  
9 if it was Edge itself, or maybe it contracted out  
10 for a drone photo here. I believe this was taken  
11 in late January or early February, so not too long  
12 ago.

13 I believe it was during the week and during  
14 what we're calling peak-hour periods, five to  
15 six o'clock maybe at night. You can see -- and  
16 like said, I don't know the exact timeframe this  
17 was taken, but you can see from this view, there's  
18 a significant amount of parking located between  
19 the existing Jared's building and the existing  
20 bank there.

21 As a matter of fact, we counted the number of  
22 occupied spaces from this picture in that what  
23 we're calling area "F." There's only 46 cars  
24 parked there. So when you account for the  
25 increase in parking in that area you're looking at

1 close to 200 available parking spaces based on  
2 this picture in that area. So I just wanted to  
3 make that point.

4 Just a couple items in regards to the  
5 rebuttal presentation that was made. It was  
6 stated there's an estimate of 180 parked cars that  
7 can be attributed to the Edge Fitness user.  
8 Because it is a shared-use plaza and there's  
9 different uses there; there's a Trader Joe's  
10 supermarket nearby, there's a liquor store,  
11 there's some other small food restaurants in  
12 there.

13 It's impossible, I would say, to accurately  
14 represent how many parking spaces in that lot are  
15 dedicated just to Edge Fitness and may not be  
16 shared-use parking spaces for other visitors that  
17 maybe they're going to the gym, but maybe they're  
18 also going to Total Wine, or maybe they're also  
19 going to Trader Joe's after their workout. So I  
20 would say there's no way to actually verify there  
21 is 180 parking spaces that are dedicated solely to  
22 the Edge users.

23 In regards to the count data collected at the  
24 Manchester BJ's, I think we would agree I think  
25 during their peak time they had counted around 130

1 or so occupied parking spaces in that Manchester  
2 location. If you recall during my presentation we  
3 stated the ITE data represents approximately 120  
4 occupied spaces to account for a restaurant user  
5 of this size. So I would say generally that is in  
6 line with the information we've presented.

7 I would note BJ's in Manchester, the out  
8 parcel there is located further away from the rest  
9 of the mall there. I believe it's about 5 to 6  
10 hundred feet away. In this location here the  
11 proposed restaurant would be in closer proximity  
12 to some of the other users. So I think there's  
13 more of an opportunity for shared-use parking  
14 within this center as compared to perhaps  
15 Manchester. So I think the estimate of 120 to,  
16 we'll say, 130 cars is reasonable.

17 I would say in my professional opinion it  
18 wouldn't be standard industry practice, ITE data  
19 for example to take counts from a single location,  
20 i.e., Manchester and then apply a 20 percent  
21 increase factor to a plaza, similar mixed-use  
22 characteristics not that far away. I would say to  
23 jump from 130 to 175, 180 parking spaces I would  
24 say would not be an industry standard practice to  
25 do that.

1 I would also note that although there might  
2 be an increase in the gym membership, I believe it  
3 was stated an additional 5,000 members or so maybe  
4 in the next year or two. That doesn't mean  
5 they're all going to be active members. Right?

6 I think over time generally speaking people  
7 sign up, you know, it was January, resolutions  
8 were going on. It's a grand opening. It's a  
9 brand-new business, and although there might be an  
10 increase in membership that doesn't necessarily  
11 mean that everyone is going to keep using that  
12 membership on a regular basis.

13 In that regard, I think I should also mention  
14 that -- so in that vein, to assume there's going  
15 to be a 50 percent growth in the parking demand  
16 required for the Edge Fitness, I just don't see  
17 that happening personally. That said, although  
18 the presentation did bring up some valid points I  
19 think it did confirm generally that 120 to 130  
20 cars we can anticipate for the proposed restaurant  
21 use is on par.

22 I don't believe, however, that taking the  
23 counts from Manchester and then applying the  
24 25 percent growth rate and then applying an  
25 estimate for the existing Edge parking demand, and



1 applying a 50 percent growth rate to that number  
2 to get us to this whole area being full is -- I  
3 don't think that's accurate, I would say.

4 In regards to the traffic, just to reiterate  
5 we did submit an application for an administrative  
6 decision to the Office of State Traffic  
7 Administration. I had handed out that letter.  
8 The only thing holding up that approval is  
9 approval from Town Council. Everything else has  
10 been reviewed. There were some minor comments in  
11 the site plan. They've been addressed. I believe  
12 town staff has reviewed the documentation  
13 submitted. They're comfortable with our analysis.

14 One other point I had just wanted to make was  
15 I think it was stated that at BJ's peak it was  
16 estimated that they may take 200 to 250 parking  
17 spaces at full, considering that only I believe  
18 it's 260 seats in the restaurant; that assumes  
19 that every seat is taken by an individual driver,  
20 which I also just don't see, you know, that  
21 happening as well.

22 There's -- I believe it was mentioned that  
23 Red Robin you may see an average of three patrons  
24 per car. Even conservatively if you brought that  
25 down to two patrons per car at 250 seats you're

1 looking at approximately 120 to 130 parking spaces  
2 required for this user, which I believe the plaza  
3 will support.

4 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Mauro. So Attorney  
5 Pearson, I know that I have a few questions. I  
6 don't know -- I'm sure some of my colleagues do.

7 So if you would like to come up?

8 So are you ready to take some questions?

9 MS. PEARSON: Yes, indeed.

10 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. So I will just start with a  
11 few that I have. I may have a couple more, but I  
12 do want to ask about the tenants, the actual  
13 tenants. And there was a statement that Edge  
14 Fitness was not aware until the middle to late  
15 December in the application. Can you talk about  
16 that?

17 MS. PEARSON: I am going to have to defer to Rebecca  
18 Wing with regard to that. I'm not privy to the  
19 communications with the various tenants.

20 If you could?

21 REBECCA WING: Rebecca Wing, Senior Investment Manager  
22 with Regency Centers. Good evening, Madam Mayor  
23 and members of the Council and members of the  
24 public.

25 Yeah, just to answer that question, so we do

1 regret that we did not reach out to tenants in  
2 advance of the filing. And I want to make it very  
3 clear that that was because we did not anticipate  
4 any objections. So my partner Jack DeVilliers,  
5 you all probably know and have dealt with in lease  
6 signings. And I have been working on this project  
7 for about a year and we really have had the goal  
8 of improving the center for the long term.

9 So after several meetings with DRAC and town  
10 officials, and a lot of reviews with our design  
11 team, you know, our mission all along was really  
12 to just upgrade it and make the parking safer.  
13 That was the thinking behind the original move of  
14 the drive aisle and we actually thought our  
15 tenants would be thrilled.

16 So we are -- we were surprised by the  
17 reaction when we did bring it up with Edge because  
18 of the no-build area, and we listened to the  
19 objection. That's why we made the change to take  
20 the drive aisle out and did look for ways to kind  
21 of try to increase parking right around where the  
22 restaurant is, but it really was not any desire to  
23 hide anything.

24 We're going to be working very closely with  
25 our tenants during construction, obviously, and we

1 are as invested as they are. We believe in all  
2 the centers we own. We're really on the same  
3 team, so we regret that this has happened this  
4 way.

5 MS. PEARSON: Rebecca, just so you talked about the  
6 investment and how we're doing this for the  
7 betterment of the center, which means of your  
8 tenants more than anything else.

9 REBECCA WING: Right.

10 MS. PEARSON: Are there any restrictions? Is there any  
11 reason to believe that people might have thought  
12 that you could not put a restaurant at that  
13 location up front?

14 REBECCA WING: No, and I would add to that that in our  
15 discussions with the restaurant tenants they have  
16 expressed that they feel that there is plenty of  
17 parking between their building and the bank.  
18 Their door will face that direction and they feel  
19 that by closing off the drive aisle beside them  
20 and increasing the landscaping there we're  
21 actually improving the safety situation overall.

22 Just to add to that, we also just as the  
23 operator would think that if we could work  
24 together with Edge we could find better locations  
25 for their additional customers to park. We have

1 already approved that pocket park, and we believe  
2 that there could be more parking behind the  
3 buildings that could use that also as an entrance  
4 and possibly be better than the, sort of,  
5 outreaches of the center where the restaurant is.

6 And that pretty much any spot that's  
7 accessible to the walkways would be better for  
8 future Edge customers than that sort of middle  
9 area by the restaurant. So we have been -- we  
10 don't see the conflict. We didn't until we had  
11 this conversation.

12 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you. And you might want to  
13 stay up for my next question. It was the snow  
14 question, which I think is real -- we're obviously  
15 not having a typical New England winter, or  
16 Connecticut winter.

17 And so obviously there that does impact many  
18 parking spaces. And how do we treat and where  
19 would you store snow to make sure? And one of the  
20 pictures that came around does have maybe five or  
21 eight spaces that are encumbered by snow.

22 REBECCA WING: Yeah. So in general it's not  
23 commercially reasonable to cart it offsite. So  
24 we're not able to commit to not storing it  
25 somewhere on the asphalt, but I can commit to

1 working with our property management team to make  
2 sure there is no snow stored in the parking spots  
3 in these areas, the four or five designated areas  
4 in question, because those, we realize that that's  
5 a concern. So we could use some -- find some less  
6 used driveways to the back, perhaps.

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. And just to follow up on  
8 that, the Trader Joe carts that tend to maybe take  
9 up a space that might otherwise might be  
10 available, is there an agreement that you have  
11 with them or something to clear up the carts  
12 periodically? Or how does that work?

13 REBECCA WING: So there isn't, but again that's  
14 something we can work with them to make sure that  
15 they have their staff outside clearing carts on a  
16 more regular basis. That's generally something  
17 you work with the tenant on.

18 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you. That was all I had right  
19 away, but I know Ms. Blanks has --

20 MS. PEARSON: Could I just ask Rebecca to mention one  
21 other thing that she shared with me -- with one of  
22 the persons who's speaking Judy Allen?

23 REBECCA WING: Mrs. Allen mentioned the desire to have  
24 some additional electric car charging stations and  
25 that's something we can definitely look into. We

1 obviously have the Tesla stations there already,  
2 but we know that those don't serve everybody. You  
3 have to have a Tesla. So that's something we're  
4 looking at a lot of in our centers, and are happy  
5 to look for some spots here.

6 PRESIDENT CANTOR: That's great to hear. Great. Thank  
7 you.

8 Ms. Blanks?

9 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Thank you, Madam Mayor.

10 A couple questions -- and maybe even be a  
11 point of clarity for me. So I'll start with the  
12 building. I want to make sure that I heard  
13 correctly. So the building would be constructed  
14 to a new building. The existing building is going  
15 to be torn down?

16 MS. PEARSON: That is correct.

17 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay. And I'm imagining the square  
18 footage of that building is going to be increased?

19 MS. LABROT: It is increased slightly, yes.

20 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay. And with the increase and  
21 with the outdoor dining, how many spaces does that  
22 take up, parking spaces?

23 MS. PEARSON: You know, I'd like to go back to that  
24 other photograph because that also doesn't show  
25 currently where we're going to add the 12 spaces.

1           Maybe you could point that out also.

2   DAVID GAGNON:   Dave Gagnon, Langan Engineering,  
3           professional civil engineer.  It looks like we  
4           lost our PowerPoint again -- but to answer your  
5           question, we're actually increasing the amount of  
6           parking spaces versus the current condition.  
7           We're increasing on the overall SDD by 25 spaces  
8           and in that area in the vicinity of the BJ's we're  
9           adding 12 spaces versus the current conditions.  
10          So we're not losing any spaces at all.

11   COUNCILOR BLANKS:  Okay.  So with the outdoor dining  
12          and the slight increase of square footage you're  
13          not losing any.  You're going to be increasing.

14                 And also I just want to do a followup,  
15          because with the little -- I don't know what  
16          you're referring to in terms of the roadway or the  
17          existing little drive area.  What would that be to  
18          the West of the building?  That's going to be  
19          closed off.  Right?  And that's going to be  
20          landscaping and whatnot.  So the traffic is going  
21          to be diverted around that.  Correct?

22   DAVID GAGNON:  Yeah.  Yes, that is correct.  And we're  
23          able to -- the reason why we're able to increase  
24          the parking around the BJ's area is we pushed the  
25          building a little bit closer to New Britain



1 Avenue, a little bit more towards that main drive  
2 aisle. And then we're able to get a little more  
3 efficient with the parking in the area.

4 So we towed in some spots around New Britain  
5 Avenue. So it was kind of a geometric problem.  
6 So we are able to actually increase. Even though  
7 we're increasing the building square footage,  
8 we're adding the outdoor dining. We also  
9 increased the parking in that area by twelve  
10 spaces.

11 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay. So for me, how will you, I  
12 guess, work with the owners in terms of addressing  
13 the new traffic pattern? I often shop in this  
14 area and I know it's very challenging in terms of  
15 the traffic coming in from New Britain Avenue,  
16 coming in from the mall.

17 There is not a stop sign there once you come  
18 past the traffic light. And so there's only the  
19 stop sign on the opposite end, but on that main  
20 strip there isn't. And I do know that a number of  
21 people usually take the little shortcut behind the  
22 building, which will now be closed.

23 So I'm just curious to know or learn how will  
24 that be addressed, if at all?

25 DAVID GAGNON: Yeah. That's a good question, and thank

1       you for asking. That was one of our concerns as  
2       well, and if you could visualize our improvements  
3       we are closing that drive aisle if you're coming  
4       just into the plaza from across the street at that  
5       intersection.

6               We're closing that drive aisle on the left  
7       and this is to relieve traffic as you're coming  
8       off New Britain Avenue. And the idea is to  
9       prevent a queuing backup into New Britain Avenue  
10      and to add more queuing space on the plaza. So we  
11      know that this was an issue and this was our  
12      attempt to help alleviate that.

13   COUNCILOR BLANKS: Okay. So I just have another one  
14      for you, because I'm thinking about you talked  
15      about your peak time. I'm thinking about holiday  
16      traffic. So when the folks are coming from that  
17      opposite end if there isn't any stop sign once you  
18      cross through the traffic light, whoever is  
19      looking to either go straight into the Best Buy or  
20      Trader Joe's, or what have you, they may be  
21      waiting there for a good period of time because  
22      there's no stop.

23              Do you understand what I'm saying? Do you  
24      follow? Do you follow what I'm saying? I just  
25      want to be sure that I'm clear.

1 LUKE MAURO: Well, just a couple notes. Typically in,  
2 you know, in design we don't like to put a stop  
3 bar as you're entering a plaza.

4 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Uh-huh. I understand that.

5 LUKE MAURO: Okay. Just so that there's no queuing out  
6 into the, you know, into state road there. If I  
7 understand your question correctly, you're talking  
8 about this intersection here. Correct?

9 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Yeah.

10 LUKE MAURO: So I think to address concerns at this  
11 location as I previously mentioned, you know, we  
12 wouldn't want to necessarily put a stop on the  
13 inbound direction just so that maybe in busier  
14 times there isn't a queuing backup back into New  
15 Britain Avenue.

16 However, I don't think we would be opposed to  
17 providing a stop bar at this location so that  
18 there are gaps for people coming in to be able to  
19 make that turn. Is that --

20 COUNCILOR BLANKS: Yes. Thank you.

21 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you. Any other questions from  
22 Councilors? Okay. Ms. Fay --

23 MS. PEARSON: Someone from the audience, if I may, just  
24 asked if we could point out where that might be on  
25 this side. Could you walk around and just point

1 out where that might be on this side?

2 So you're now going to show where it might  
3 go.

4 Okay. Thank you.

5 LUKE MAURO: So I think the comment was, we can  
6 certainly -- to improve safety operations there,  
7 we could put a stop bar as you approach going  
8 towards New Britain Avenue in order to allow for  
9 vehicles to make that turn into that and increase  
10 safety in that area.

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Mauro.

12 Ms. Fay?

13 COUNCILOR FAY: Thank you, Mayor Cantor.

14 I have more of a technical question because I  
15 really want to make sure that this is an important  
16 decision, that I understand it as presented. You  
17 mentioned some driving terminology, that ITE 31  
18 for retail -- I think it was you, Attorney  
19 Harris -- versus 121 for restaurant.

20 Can you translate that into what that means?  
21 I understand 121 is bigger than 31, but is it  
22 simple math or is it an exponentially bigger  
23 impact?

24 LUKE MAURO: So ITE, Institute of Transportation  
25 Engineers, call it our bible, if you will,

1 industry standard for estimating both parking and  
2 traffic demands. I think the intent of the  
3 comment was to state based on ITE data which is  
4 collected from numerous sources throughout the  
5 country, for a retail user of this size you would  
6 anticipate a demand of approximately 30 parked  
7 cars at the peak -- sorry, 37. I believe that's  
8 during the December peak period.

9 And then during -- sorry, for a restaurant  
10 user of this size you would anticipate a peak  
11 parking demand of 121, meaning that that use  
12 specifically would take up 121 parking spaces.  
13 And again, that doesn't account for shared uses.  
14 Because this is a mixed-use center you're going to  
15 have likely some restaurant patrons that are --  
16 might go shopping at Best Buy, might be going to  
17 the liquor store, and so on and so forth. That's  
18 just a base number.

19 COUNCILOR FAY: And then one more followup, because now  
20 I'm -- I thought I understood it, but now I'm  
21 really confused. So the entryway coming in, I'm  
22 guessing that this is a representation of what  
23 it's going to look like in the future?

24 LUKE MAURO: Correct.

25 COUNCILOR FAY: And can you just explain -- I mean, I

1 go there all the time, but just I'm trying to get  
2 a picture in my mind of what it looks like now.

3 So what are the changes? Are we going from  
4 three lanes to two?

5 LUKE MAURO: So this is probably the best picture we  
6 have of that area. If you could see now just to  
7 the west of the Jared's building there is an  
8 existing drive aisle.

9 In the proposed case -- let me click back  
10 here -- we're removing that drive aisle; one, to  
11 maximize parking in that area; and two, I think it  
12 eliminates a conflict point as you enter in off  
13 the street, therefore, you know, lessening the  
14 likelihood of an accident, say, happening there.

15 COUNCILOR FAY: The main drive is the same?

16 LUKE MAURO: The main drive is the same. Our original  
17 application was to relocate the drive aisle over  
18 there, but based on negotiations that was removed  
19 from the application.

20 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Ms. Fay. Are you all  
21 set?

22 COUNCILOR FAY: Yes, thank you.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Any other questions from our  
24 Council? Mr. Davidoff? No? Okay. Mr. Stafford?

25 MR. STAFFORD: I'd like to go back to the snow.

1 Looking at this picture -- and I did visit the  
2 site this morning, all I see is parking spaces.  
3 So I'm trying to figure out where they are now  
4 piling the snow in other years than this year, and  
5 how many parking spaces has it been taking up?

6 MS. PEARSON: I don't think we can give you that  
7 specific answer. I can tell you just from  
8 personal observation that there have been years  
9 where there's been significant snow in the parking  
10 area such that it's had to be trucked offsite. I  
11 do recall that has happened.

12 Obviously, Regency is not going to let snow  
13 sit in this parking lot to the extent that it  
14 alleviates open parking spaces so that nobody can  
15 utilize the center. And I think you just heard  
16 from Regency that they will make sure certainly in  
17 this area where most of the activity is right now  
18 in front of Trader Joe's and Edge they have made a  
19 commitment that the snow storage will take place  
20 somewhere where people are not using the parking  
21 spaces.

22 And at some point -- I mean, the reality is  
23 at some point if there -- again that kind of snow  
24 that has been experienced in the past, then they  
25 will have to remove it from the site, which

1           they've had to do it in the past.

2   MR. STAFFORD:   Okay.   Thank you.

3   PRESIDENT CANTOR:   All set, Mr. Stafford?

4           Okay.   Mr. Mathews.

5   MR. MATHEWS:   Just some clarification.   This  
6           application seemed to be a number of different  
7           proposals, as I see it.   It's facade improvement,  
8           landscaping, roadwork and Trader Joe adding 2500  
9           square feet in the back, plus the restaurant.

10           Assuming the restaurant is not approved, do  
11           you go forward with the other improvements and  
12           updates?

13   MS. PEARSON:   I don't know what they would do under the  
14           circumstances.   There is no question that the  
15           vitality and the use of that restaurant adds to  
16           the fiscal viability of the center, and one  
17           doesn't do improvements unless there's a benefit  
18           from those improvements.   So that use of the  
19           restaurant pad certainly plays a big piece in this  
20           overall puzzle.

21           I can also assure you that they wouldn't do  
22           this if they felt there was not enough parking to  
23           be able to substantiate the uses and support the  
24           uses.

25   MR. MATHEWS:   Okay.   Let me just follow up with that.



1 I guess what I'm trying to do is figure out the  
2 comment made by the applicant's employee, or staff  
3 person who indicated that they were working on  
4 this plan for over a year and never reached out to  
5 the long-term tenants.

6 I assume Red Robin -- and I don't know this  
7 for a fact, but I assume Red Robin and Edge, they  
8 have long-term leases?

9 MS. PEARSON: They do.

10 MR. MATHEWS: And I heard in the testimony that Edge  
11 made a 5 million-dollar investment. So as I sit  
12 here I can see where Edge and/or Red Robin might  
13 be a little bit concerned if in fact there's a  
14 whole lot of parking that may infringe on their  
15 5 million-dollar investment.

16 And I understand your point that as counsel  
17 for the applicant they want to try to get more  
18 revenue, and they want to lease more space. So I  
19 can see that, that push and pull between the two  
20 parties. I'm just wondering if any thought was  
21 given to the degree that you have two long-term  
22 tenants who have concerns, if any thought was  
23 given to a less impactful design for that site?

24 I know you need to lease it, and I understand  
25 how that you need to bring revenue in, but to the

1 degree that there's some concern that there may  
2 not be enough parking, was any concern given to  
3 coming up with an idea that would work well with  
4 all the existing partners you have now who are now  
5 tenants? Everyone is trying to make some money  
6 there, obviously. Everyone is trying to do well.  
7 You're all concerned that if you're wrong, all of  
8 the sudden Red Robin and Edge will be harmed.

9 Do you follow my thought?

10 MS. PEARSON: I know exactly what you're saying. So  
11 I'm going to let Rebecca answer this, but I'd like  
12 to say one thing first, which is that we were very  
13 pleased when we did our parking studies to find  
14 that the data supports the fact that there is a  
15 lot of excess parking in SDD Number 6, and we were  
16 confident that our use of the space will not be  
17 detrimental or deprive other tenants of the  
18 ability to park in this facility.

19 We concede there's no question but that this  
20 parking area that they showed you -- they didn't  
21 show you the whole field, but that area in front  
22 of those stores is totally parked. I never go to  
23 that center and park in that area. I always park  
24 out between the bank and Jared's, because there's  
25 always space there.

1           So anybody who goes there knows that is the  
2 most congested part of the site. That's a given.  
3 Part of what regency wanted to do was to put more  
4 general -- put more parking on that side of the  
5 drive aisle with that original plan.

6           But I'm going to ask Rebecca to answer what  
7 planning went into this and whether -- see, we  
8 don't think this particular restaurant is going to  
9 be such a high intensity use that it will be a  
10 problem at that location, but I'm going to let her  
11 answer the question -- because you were the one  
12 who negotiated it.

13 REBECCA WING: Yeah. So I agree with that, Robin. We  
14 don't agree that it's going to be as impactful as  
15 what our tenants have represented. So even though  
16 we know it's a more intensive use, we didn't  
17 anticipate this being an issue.

18           I would say the working on it for a year is  
19 true, however most of the time our design has been  
20 a facade renovation and the change to the drive  
21 aisle. We did not have a tenant for the Jared's  
22 space most of last year. We were certainly  
23 anticipating that it might become a restaurant,  
24 but that actually wasn't included in this until  
25 the late fall.

1           So it's not as long as it sounds that we went  
2 without approaching the tenants. It was probably  
3 a month or so after we made the change that we did  
4 so. And then again, still not anticipating it  
5 would be as big of an issue as what we're hearing.

6           I will say we anticipated a restaurant  
7 because what we see across all of our centers is  
8 that as with the Jared's closing, a lot of other  
9 businesses are struggling to survive. We  
10 generally have a lot of restaurants coming in and  
11 fitness users where traditional tenants aren't  
12 succeeding.

13           And we did carve out in the Edge lease the  
14 ability to build here and to change it, and we  
15 have every right to make it a restaurant in part  
16 because of that. We're very conscious of that  
17 across all our centers. We think it's Important n  
18 part of the vibrancy, and also just literally in  
19 making our merchandise mixes work today.

20           So we anticipated it would be a restaurant,  
21 but we didn't have a tenant or plan to include  
22 that change in this until the late fall. We do  
23 still believe it's the best use of the space.

24 MS. PEARSON: If I may? I have asked if our traffic  
25 consultant could just again explain how many

1 spaces are going to be left even if you deal with  
2 and accept the projections that they've made.

3 MR. MATHEWS: Just so we're clear, I've read the  
4 proposal and I understand all that, but just Madam  
5 Chair, a clarification through you -- if you don't  
6 mind?

7 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes.

8 MR. MATHEWS: When this is voted on, do we vote on in  
9 toto?

10 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Yes.

11 MS. PEARSON: I'd still like if it's possible to slip  
12 that information in.

13 MR. MATHEWS: I'm not chairing the meeting.

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Attorney Pearson, you can answer the  
15 question.

16 LUKE MAURO: So based on the information presented by  
17 the tenants tonight, assuming their BJ's counts  
18 with the 25 percent increase were to transfer, if  
19 you will, over to the Corbin's Corner shopping  
20 Center, and if that estimated 180 existing parking  
21 spaces occupied by the Edge Fitness were to  
22 increase again by 50 percent; when you account for  
23 the parking demand observed from our counts and  
24 you take all that additional parking into  
25 consideration it only totals 659 occupied spaces

1 on the lot, which is still 400 vacant parking  
2 spaces for the center as a whole.

3 That's a parking occupancy of only  
4 76 percent, which I would say is well under the 85  
5 to 90 percent that we said we would achieve for a  
6 typical design.

7 MS. PEARSON: And may I clarify? That is for the  
8 entire SDD.

9 LUKE MAURO: That's correct. That's for the entire  
10 SDD, yeah.

11 MS. PEARSON: Now they've chosen to look at only our  
12 ownership portion of the SDD, but there's shared  
13 parking throughout that special development  
14 district. It's not restricted to either side at  
15 all.

16 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Attorney Pearson.

17 Do you want to address the question that  
18 Mr. Mathews asked about, the voting as a whole or  
19 voting -- Corporation Counsel could also answer as  
20 we're taking that.

21 MR. DODGE: Thank you, Madam Mayor. You would vote on  
22 the application as a whole, and that's it.

23 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you. I just thought we needed  
24 to confirm. Thank you.

25 Mr. Gold.

1 COUNCILOR GOLD: Thank you, Madam Mayor. Thank you for  
2 the presentation on both sides. While I think  
3 this is kind of vailed in some competition going  
4 on in the parking lot area, I do want to address a  
5 concern I have for safety.

6 We've heard from a town resident -- while  
7 they generally walked to the area, what safety  
8 precautions are you going to have? As we  
9 residents have been to this area it is a difficult  
10 scenario to navigate as you go through. I just  
11 want you to address a little bit more about the  
12 safety issues for our pedestrian friendly  
13 environment.

14 LUKE MAURO: Sure. I just think a couple safety  
15 improvements. Number one would be the closing off  
16 of that drive aisle in this location. So you  
17 know, if there were a pedestrian to enter on this  
18 side and not crossing a drive aisle right there by  
19 New Britain Avenue, we're also proposing some  
20 sidewalks along the proposed restaurant there.

21 Our former application did have more  
22 significant sidewalk additions as we were, you  
23 know, relocating that proposed parking there with  
24 some -- I believe there was one or two  
25 additional -- or maybe relocated crosswalk

1 locations there.

2 And actually -- again, the previous  
3 application. You could see there we also were  
4 proposing to add some additional sidewalks  
5 connecting from the proposed restaurant parcel to  
6 the front of the Trader Joe's itself at this time,  
7 because that whole realignment has been removed  
8 from the application. Those are no longer on the  
9 table.

10 Does that answer the question?

11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Gold.

12 Mr. Davidoff?

13 MR. DODGE: Madam Mayor?

14 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Mr. Dodge?

15 MR. DODGE: Just to clarify, at the risk of having been  
16 oversimplistic before, the Council's action for an  
17 SDD is to approve this group, or to improve with  
18 modifications and can also approve it subject to  
19 conditions. We have already drafted the standard  
20 conditions for approval, and obviously  
21 occasionally add to those. So I just wanted to  
22 clarify the action that the Council can take  
23 tonight.

24 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Dodge.

25 MS. PEARSON: And if I may? I would like to add to the



1 last comments that were made about sidewalk  
2 improvements, pedestrian access. While it is true  
3 that the changes to the parking area which  
4 included some of those amenities that Mr. Mauro  
5 talked about are off the table with this  
6 application because of the implications with  
7 potential lease restrictions with Edge, Regency is  
8 committed to at some point the potential for  
9 coming back in with those in the future if it all  
10 works out, but that is not off the table as far as  
11 Regency is concerned.

12 But for now we feel we have a very acceptable  
13 plan and it works and this will allow at this  
14 point, should this be approved, the entire  
15 renovation that is before you right now to be able  
16 to go forward.

17 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Attorney Pearson.

18 So a follow-up for Mr. Mathews. I think he  
19 was wondering -- his question again, Mr. Dodge,  
20 whether could you approve this without the  
21 restaurant? Why don't you state your question?

22 MR. MATHEWS: It sounds, if I heard you correctly,  
23 Madam Chair, through you, it sounds like what  
24 you're saying is we could in fact modify the  
25 application.

1           If I understood you, vote on the facade, vote  
2           on the other various pieces. Is that what you're  
3           saying? I'm not sure.

4   MR. DODGE: Thank you, Madam Mayor. At the meeting  
5           that follows, yes, the action would be if somebody  
6           wanted to propose a modification to the approval,  
7           then would be a vote of the Council in terms of  
8           whether they want to approve subject to  
9           modification or to disapprove.

10   PRESIDENT CANTOR: So Mr. Mathews, the process would be  
11           that if you wanted to make a modification and  
12           amendment really it would have to be seconded.  
13           And then it would be voted on by the Council  
14           before it would be added and then we would vote on  
15           the amended.

16           So, Mr. Davidoff?

17   COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank you, Madam Mayor.

18           Attorney Pearson, I have a series of  
19           questions I just want to make certain I get into  
20           the record. What would the applicant consider to  
21           be the peak hours of operation for the center?

22   MS. PEARSON: By peak hours we're talking about the  
23           parking demand on the center. And those, would  
24           you?

25   LUKE MAURO: Sure. So peak hour on Saturday would be

1           generally between two and three in the afternoon,  
2           and then during the evening I believe the peak  
3           hour is five to six.

4 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:   How about during the week?

5 LUKE MAURO:   I'm sorry.   During the week a peak hour on  
6           a typical weekday would be five to six when the  
7           gym and restaurant uses would be at use, higher  
8           use.

9 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:   And are there any tenants that are  
10          closed during those peak hours?

11 LUKE MAURO:   I believe the bank is closed, which is  
12          located within our parking area.   And other than  
13          the bank itself I would have to verify, but I  
14          don't believe -- everything else is likely open at  
15          that time.

16 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:   I just want to get a bunch of  
17          answers onto the record so that when I make my  
18          decision I can refer back to them.   When the  
19          management company looks at tenant mix is one of  
20          the criteria that is used -- is the duration of  
21          how long someone would stay or frequent, their  
22          length of stay at a particular establishment?

23                So obviously if you're going to go in this  
24          particular plaza, the pediatric, it would be to  
25          see the doctor as long as there's a doctors

1 appointment; to go to Trader Joe's, to do your  
2 grocery shopping; so you can get an estimate, to  
3 go to the gym it would be a certain length of  
4 time.

5 So do you have some type of industry  
6 guidebook with respect to your centers as to, you  
7 know, what would be a good mix of durational  
8 space?

9 REBECCA WING: So we don't have -- there's no  
10 guidebook. There's nothing scientific. We  
11 certainly think about it, but it's more -- there's  
12 no particular guideline. Really the traffic  
13 guidelines and parking guidelines are the most  
14 standardized version of that that we have, and we  
15 certainly listen to our engineers as far as their  
16 advice as we develop our plan.

17 LUKE MAURO: And by no means is this a fact, but I  
18 would say a reasonable assumption is if you're  
19 going to several uses you can anticipate the  
20 average user staying maybe two or three hours or  
21 so.

22 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Okay. Thank you. I'm certain  
23 that had there been a movie theater here someone  
24 would see a movie for an hour or two and maybe eat  
25 something. So the average stay could be, you

1 know, three or four hours -- but compared to  
2 somebody who's not going to be grocery shopping  
3 for three or four hours.

4 And I don't think anyone is working out at  
5 the gym for three or four hours. So -- God bless  
6 them if they are. We're sitting here for three or  
7 four hours. This seems to be our workout.

8 Another question to the management company.  
9 Would you consider the restaurant use a high  
10 intensity use as described by the party in  
11 opposition to your application today? Why and why  
12 not.

13 REBECCA WING: So I think that term is actually just a  
14 parking intensive -- that term refers to parking  
15 intensity. And yes, that is an industry standard  
16 thing as our engineers have spoken to, that we do  
17 use a higher ratio of how many spots are needed  
18 per square foot of space. So it is a higher  
19 intensity use in terms of parking usage.

20 That said, we do also see that there's shared  
21 parking where we expect that some of the people  
22 who are going to the restaurant will be also  
23 shopping and parking elsewhere even on the other  
24 part of the property. So we certainly see things  
25 like restaurants and this type of a restaurant as

1       being part of a larger experience of the center,  
2       if that helps.

3   COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:  We have lots of applications that  
4       come before this body, and many restaurants have  
5       come through over the years and I've never heard  
6       the term that a restaurant use was characterized  
7       as a high intensity use.  And so --

8   MS. PEARSON:  That is just borrowed from the ITE manual  
9       that describes that type of restaurant, which is a  
10      sitdown.

11   LUKE MAURO:  Sure, sitdown.  And I mean, there are  
12      higher in terms of parking -- not parking, traffic  
13      demand, higher intensity uses such as a restaurant  
14      with a drive-through.  Not necessarily higher  
15      demand in parking, but definitely higher demand in  
16      traffic as people are, you know, kind of pushing  
17      through rather quickly.

18   COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:  So it's fair to say the  
19      terminology "high intensity use" would refer to  
20      the parking demand with respect to that particular  
21      use?

22   LUKE MAURO:  Correct.

23   COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF:  Okay.  There seems to be some  
24      disagreement as to the necessity of a traffic  
25      study, and it's fair to characterize your position

that no traffic study is necessary.

Now does that meet national standards as to being the situation?

LUKE MAURO: Sure. So Connecticut DOT has a standard. When you submit for an OSTA application, generally if a proposed project is anticipated to increase traffic on the surrounding area roadway network by over a hundred cars in an hour, a hundred cars meaning a total of in and out -- so say, 50 in, 50 out, that would be your hundred.

If a proposed project would generate more than a hundred trips an hour, then traffic counts traffic analysis, level of service, all that would come into play.

In this case New Britain Avenue is under state jurisdiction. We submitted a similar memo, a traffic assessment memo as was submitted to the Town. OSTA has reviewed that memo and overall site plan and some other supporting materials and they are in agreement that the traffic, the additional traffic demand that this user would bring would be less than a hundred trips, which we would consider within the day-to-day variation of traffic on the adjacent roadway network.

Thursday you might have a thousand cars.

1 Maybe Friday you have 1200 cars. That's already  
2 kind of built into the daily variation of traffic  
3 there. Therefore, no further analysis is  
4 required. So that would be a state standard.

5 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: And if a traffic study would be  
6 necessitated there, could there also be the  
7 likelihood or probability that the applicant -- or  
8 could be required to perform some offsite  
9 improvements with respect to that state highway  
10 with respect to traffic signalization or lane  
11 configuration. Is that correct?

12 LUKE MAURO: It is a possibility. Just speaking on  
13 this intersection in particular there are already  
14 a number of approaches. You're looking at three  
15 lanes coming out of the plaza. I think there's  
16 three lanes coming out from the mall across the  
17 street.

18 There are several -- it looks like there's  
19 four, four to five approach lanes on New Britain  
20 Avenue itself. So I would venture to guess you're  
21 most likely not going to do any physical  
22 improvements at this location.

23 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: My next question deals with  
24 management. Does management have parking  
25 restrictions as to where employees can or should



1 park?

2 MS. PEARSON: Rebecca, identify yourself.

3 REBECCA WING: Rebecca Wing with Regency Centers. So  
4 we don't have our own restrictions, but we do work  
5 out on a tenant-by-tenant basis some areas where  
6 we would prefer for their employees to park.  
7 Generally that's to preserve the more desirable  
8 spots for customers.

9 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Great. So I think it's pretty  
10 well established with all of us that consumers  
11 like to park as close as possible to the  
12 establishment that they're going to. So would  
13 management be willing to look into some type of  
14 policy with respect to having the employees of the  
15 various establishments in the plaza parking in  
16 certain designated areas to free up spaces for  
17 visitors, consumers?

18 REBECCA WING: We would and we have already to some  
19 extent both with Edge and Red Robin -- agreed on  
20 areas that are preferred customer -- preferred  
21 employee parking areas.

22 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: I think what I'm asking is I think  
23 it may need to go further than just those two  
24 tenants. If somebody works at Simple Greek or  
25 they worked at Best Buy those people who are

1 employees, they ought to also be in what I call  
2 the employee parking area.

3 REBECCA WING: Yes, that is something that we can look  
4 at. For example, the parking that is behind the  
5 other wing of the center is underutilized. Yes,  
6 right there and we can look at it absolutely.  
7 That's something we do in other centers as well.

8 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: This is now to the traffic  
9 engineer. In your experience -- because I've  
10 never seen this before other than tonight. Have  
11 you ever had evidence of parking from another  
12 location, another town compared to an application  
13 you're presenting before a body such as ours?

14 So compare parking data from Manchester in  
15 this particular instance to what could be parking  
16 information here in West Hartford.

17 LUKE MAURO: Generally speaking, no. Normally it is  
18 based on ITE which is the industry standard.  
19 There would be exceptions in cases where there is  
20 no ITE data for a specific use. So you have to go  
21 to a reasonable location and count something to  
22 that effect, but in terms of taking a number, you  
23 know, a town, you know, a few towns and then  
24 applying an increase of 25 percent to it, I've  
25 never seen that myself.

1 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Right. And I think the distance,  
2 it's fair to note for the record, I think we're at  
3 least 25 to 30 miles from West Hartford to  
4 Manchester, to this location -- or somewhere in  
5 there.

6 Is there any information available on the  
7 hours of operation for the proposed restaurant?

8 REBECCA WING: I don't have it readily available. I  
9 would have to check on that.

10 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: That would have been helpful to  
11 determine whether or not there's going to be  
12 conflicts early Saturday morning, or Sunday  
13 morning with respect to people frequenting a gym  
14 or Trader Joe's.

15 LUKE MAURO: I think we can state with certainty that  
16 this user will not be serving breakfast, if that  
17 answers your question. So I think reasonable to  
18 assume eleven o'clock opening for lunch, if that  
19 answers your question.

20 I don't think they would be bringing a large  
21 demand of vehicles during the morning hours either  
22 on the weekends or during the week.

23 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: And do you know the hours of  
24 operation of the Trader Joe's, the Best Buy, what  
25 time they open in the morning?

1 REBECCA WING: Yeah, usually ten or eleven on the  
2 weekend. Traders is a little bit earlier. In  
3 some of our locations as early as eight, but I  
4 would have to double check with our management  
5 team.

6 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: I'm getting done. I'm almost  
7 done. The restaurant tenant, do you believe that  
8 that would be a complement to your plaza in terms  
9 of the mix, and why?

10 REBECCA WING: Absolutely, and I don't know if I made  
11 it clearer earlier. It's something that we try to  
12 bring to all of our centers increasingly, and just  
13 a lot more restaurants in general. Because what  
14 we're seeing in the way people shop today is that  
15 there are, you know, obviously with online  
16 shopping, you know, it's easier to stay home for  
17 something. So we're really looking at mixes that  
18 will bring people out and keep a center relevant  
19 and make it familiar to them.

20 So even if you know, there are some uses  
21 where someone will come to a restaurant and also,  
22 you know, go to Best Buy in the same trip, there  
23 are other times where they may come one day and go  
24 to the restaurant. And then they may say, okay.  
25 There's a shop there. I'd like to visit, and they

1           come back another time.

2           So there's a lot of synergies between  
3           restaurants and other uses and we, just across the  
4           board, would really like to get them in. And  
5           there are instances like Jared's where there are  
6           traditional businesses going out of business. And  
7           there are, in some cases, fewer to work with. And  
8           so we do need to replace them with restaurants.

9           And I'd like to say on that point, we  
10          consider this one application. In order to  
11          justify a large investment in a center like this  
12          part of it does mean being able to find a new  
13          tenant for that, for that Jared's box. We don't  
14          want it to remain empty. We don't think that's  
15          good for anybody. So in our mind it really is  
16          one, one application.

17       COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Well, as a-brick-and-mortar  
18          retailer I understand exactly what you're saying  
19          in terms of the current experience with respect to  
20          retail and dining.

21          I think I heard just recently within your  
22          testimony you would be willing to work with  
23          tenants who have lease restrictions on parking to  
24          see if there could be some type of meeting of the  
25          minds to find a solution, regardless of how this

1 application here this evening turns out. Is that  
2 correct?

3 REBECCA WING: Yes, and I don't -- it's not so much  
4 lease restrictions. I think there the issue at  
5 this point is just a general concern over the high  
6 demand in certain areas. And we are more than  
7 willing and eager to work with our tenants to find  
8 ways to, whether it's employee parking designation  
9 to make that work -- or the commitment on snow  
10 removal.

11 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: And my last question is, one of  
12 the criticisms was that this was creating an  
13 unsafe environment in the parking lot, and I think  
14 your initial plan had straightened out the drive  
15 lane and had resolved some of the conflicts that  
16 people have with respect to turning movements and  
17 stuff like that.

18 So I guess if there's a meeting of the  
19 minds I think -- or do you think that one of your  
20 priorities would be to remove as many safety  
21 impediments from the parking scenario as it  
22 currently exists that we all can probably identify  
23 today going forward?

24 REBECCA WING: Yes, that was our original intention.  
25 And we do hope to be able to revisit that in the

1 future if we are in agreement with our tenants.  
2 That's the right thing to do.

3 COUNCILOR DAVIDOFF: Thank you for your answers. I  
4 appreciate it.

5 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you, Mr. Davidoff.

6 Anybody else from the Council have a  
7 question?

8  
9 (No response.)

10  
11 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Okay. So I think we have -- I would  
12 just like to read into the record -- and I know  
13 you already did, but a letter dated January 13,  
14 2020, from TPZ recommending approval; a letter  
15 dated January 21, 2020, from DRAC recommending  
16 approval; a letter dated January 24, 2020, from  
17 CROG finding no apparent conflict.

18 So if you have some closing remarks, and then  
19 we will close the public hearing.

20 MS. PEARSON: I really do not. I think we've exhausted  
21 the topic. Reasonable people do seem to disagree  
22 on something right now with regard to the parking.  
23 I would like to reiterate that you did have your  
24 engineering department review the parking  
25 assessment and you do have that most recent

1 transmittal that came in today which accepts the  
2 analysis done by the applicant.

3 So with that I think we've presented --  
4 unless I'm looking at the team -- there's anything  
5 else you wanted to add?

6 They're shaking their head no. We thank you  
7 for you time and we definitely hope that you can  
8 approve this application. Thank you.

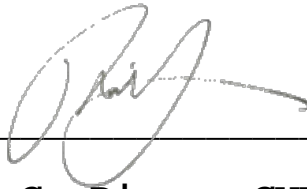
9 PRESIDENT CANTOR: Thank you very much. We will close  
10 the public hearing and we will take a five-minute  
11 break and be back to start the Council meeting.

12  
13 (Whereupon, the above proceedings were  
14 concluded at 9:08 p.m.)  
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CERTIFICATE

I hereby certify that the foregoing 128 pages are a complete and accurate computer-aided transcription of my original verbatim notes taken of the Public Hearing in RE: APPLICATION FILED ON BEHALF OF FW CT-CORBIN'S CORNER SHOPPING CENTER, LLC, OWNER OF 1459 NEW BRITAIN AVENUE, LOCATED WITHIN SPECIAL DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (SDD) #6, 1445-1459 NEW BRITAIN AVENUE, held before the West Hartford Town Council, at Town Hall, 50 South Main Street, Room 314, West Hartford, Connecticut, on February 25, 2020.



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